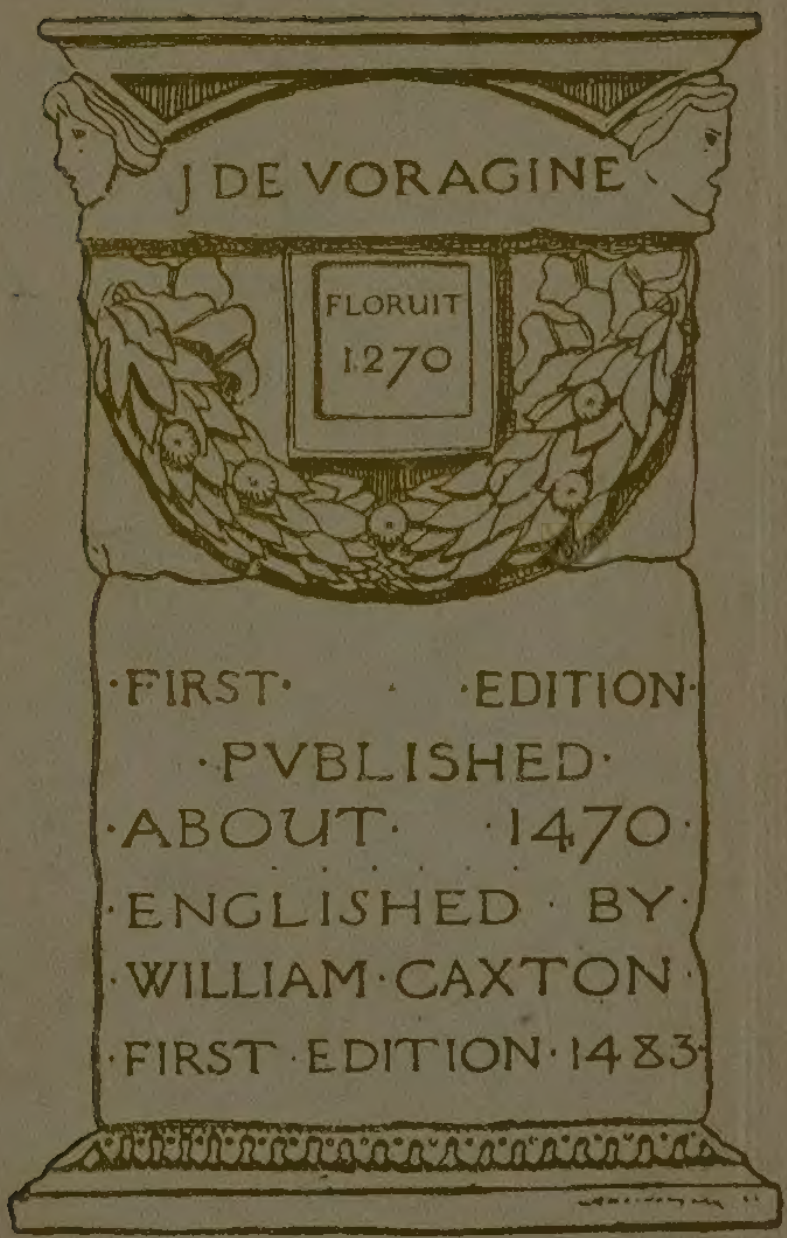
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THE GOLDEN LEGEND

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The GOLDEN LEGEND or LIVES of the SAINTS as ENGLISHED by WILLIAM CAXTON

VOL TWO

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THE GOLDEN LEGEND

The History of Joshua

The History of Joshua

After Moses, Joshua was duke and leader of the children of Israel, and brought them into the land of behest, and did many great battles. For whom God showed many great marvels and in especial one; that was that the sun stood still at his request, till he had overcome his enemies, by the space of a day. And our Lord, when he fought, sent down such hail-stones that slew more of his enemies with the stones than with man's hand.

Joshua was a noble man and governed well Israel, and divided the land unto the twelve tribes by lot. And when he was an hundred and ten years old he died. And divers dukes after him judged and deemed Israel, of whom be noble histories, as of Jephthah, Gideon, and Sampson, which I pass over unto the histories of the kings, which is read in holy church from the first Sunday after Trinity Sunday, unto the first Sunday of August. And in the month of August is read the Book of Sapience, and in the month of September be read the histories of Job, of Tobit, and of Judith, and in October the history of the Maccabees, and in November the book of Ezechiel and his visions. And in December the history of Advent, and the book of Isaiah unto Christmas

The History of Saul

and after the feast of Epiphany unto Septuagesima be read the Epistles of Paul. And this is the rule of the temporal through the year, etc.

The History of Saul.

The first Sunday after Trinity Sunday unto the first Sunday of the month of August is read the Book of Kings.

This history maketh mention that there was a man named Elkanah which had two wives, that one was named Hannah, and the name of the second Peninnah. Peninnah had children and Hannah had none but was barren. The good man at such days as he was bounden, went to his city for to make his sacrifice and worship God. In this time Hophni and Phineas sons of Eli, the great priest, were priests of our Lord. This Elkanah gave to Peninnah at such times as he offered, to her sons and daughters, certain parts, and unto Hannah he gave but one part. Peninnah did much sorrow and reproof to Hannah because she had had no children, and thus did every year, and provoked her to wrath, but she wept for sorrow and ate no meat. To whom Elkanah her husband said: Hannah, why weepest thou? and wherefore eatest thou not? Why is thine heart put to affliction? Am I not better to thee than ten sons? Then Hannah arose after she had eaten and drunk in Shilo and went to pray unto our Lord, making to him a vow if that she might have a son she should offer him to our Lord. Eli that time sat tofore the posts of the house of our Lord. And Hannah besought and prayed our Lord, making to him a vow, if that she might

have a son she should offer him to our Lord. And it was so that she prayed so heartily in her thought and mind, that her lips moved not, wherefore Eli bare her on hand that she was drunk. And she said: Nay, my Lord, I am a sorrowful woman, I have drunken no wine ne drink that may cause me to be drunken, but I have made my prayers, and cast my soul in the sight of Almighty God. Repute me not as one of the daughters of Belial, for the prayer that I have made and spoken yet is of the multitude of the heaviness and sorrow of my heart. Then Eli the priest said to her: Go in peace, the God of Israel give to thee the petition of thy heart for that thou hast prayed him. And she said: Would God that thy handservant might find grace in thy sight. And so she departed, and on the morn they went home again in to Ramatha. After this our Lord remembered her, and Elkanah knew her, and she conceived, and at time accustomed brought forth and bare a fair son and named him Samuel for so much as she asked him of our Lord. Wherefore Elkanah, her husband, went and offered a solemn sacrifice and his vow accomplished, but Hannah ascended not with him. She said to her husband that she would not go till her child were weaned and taken from the pap. And after when Samuel was weaned, and was an infant, the mother took him, and three calves and three measures of meal, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of our Lord in Shilo and sacrificed that calf and offered the child to Eli, and told to Eli that she was the woman that prayed our Lord for that child. And there Hannah worshipped our Lord and thanked him, and there made this psalm which is one of the

The History of Saul

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canticles: Exultavit cor meum in domino, et exaltatum est cornu meum in deo meo, and so forth, all the remnant of that psalm. And then Elkanah with his wife returned home to his house. After this our Lord visited Hannah, and she conceived three sons, and two daughters, which she brought forth. And Samuel abode in the house of our Lord and was minister in the sight of Eli. But the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas were children of Belial, not knowing our Lord, but did great sins against the commandments of God. And our Lord sent a prophet to Eli because he corrected not his sons, and said he would take the office from him and from his house, and that there should not be an old man in his house and kindred, but should die ere they came to man's estate, and that God should raise a priest that should be faithful and after his heart.

Samuel served and ministered our Lord in a surplice before Eli. And on a time as Eli lay in his bed his eyes were so dimmed that he might not see the lantern of God till it was quenched and put out. Samuel slept in the temple of our Lord whereas the ark of God was, and our Lord called Samuel, which answered: I am ready, and ran to Eli and said: I am ready, thou calledst me. Which said: I called thee not my son, return and sleep, and he returned and slept. And our Lord called him the second time, and he arose and went to Eli and said: Lo! I am here, thou calledst me, which answered: I called thee not, go thy way, and sleep. Samuel knew not the calling of our Lord yet, ne there was never revelation showed him tofore. And our Lord called Samuel the third time, which arose and came to Eli and said: I am here, for thou calledst me. Then Eli under-

stood that our Lord had called him, and said to Samuel: Go and sleep, and if thou be called again thou shalt say: Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth thee. Samuel returned and slept in his place, and our Lord came and called him: Samuel! Samuel! and Samuel said: Say, Lord, what it pleaseth, for thy servant heareth. And then our Lord said to Samuel: Lo! I make my word to be known in Israel that whoso heareth, his ears shall ring and sound thereof. In that day I shall raise against Eli all that I have said upon his house. I shall begin and accomplish it. I have given him in knowledge that I shall judge his house for wickedness, forasmuch as he knoweth his sons to do wickedly, and hath not corrected them. Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the wickedness of his house shall not be made clean with sacrifices ne gifts never. Samuel slept till on the morn, and then he rose and opened the doors of the house of our Lord in his surplice; and Samuel was afeard to show this vision unto Eli. Eli called him and asked what our Lord hath said to him and charged him to tell him all: and Samuel told to him all that our Lord had said, and hid nothing from him. And he said: He is our Lord, what it pleaseth him, let him do. Samuel grew, and our Lord was with him in all his works. And it was known to all Israel from Dan to Beersheba that Samuel was the true prophet of our Lord. After this it was so that the Philistines warred against the children of Israel, against whom there was a battle, and the children of Israel overthrown and put to flight. Wherefore they assembled again, and took with them the ark of God which Hophni and Phineas, sons of Eli, bare, and when they came with a

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great multitude with the ark, the Philistines were afraid. Notwithstanding they fought against them manly and slew thirty thousand footmen of the children of Israel and took the ark of God. And the two sons of Eli were slain, Hophni and Phineas. And a man of the tribe of Benjamin ran for to tell this unto Eli which sat abiding some tidings of the battle. This man, as soon as he entered into the town, told how the field was lost, the people slain, and how the ark was taken. And there was a great sorrow and cry. And when Eli heard this cry and wailing he demanded what this noise was and meant, and wherefore they so sorrowed. Then the man hied and came and told to Eli. Eli was at that tide ninety-eight years old, and his eyes were waxen blind and might not see, and he said: I am he that came from the battle, and fled this day from the host. To whom Eli said: What is there done my son? He answered: The host of Israel is overthrown and fled tofore the Philistines, and a great ruin is made among the people, thy two sons be slain and the ark of God is taken. And when Eli heard him name the ark of God he fell down backward by the door and brake his neck and there died. He was an old man and had judged Israel forty years. Then the Philistines took the ark of God and set it in their temple of Dagon, by their god Dagon, in Ashdod. On the morn, the next day early, when they of Ashdod came into their temple, they saw their god Dagon lie on the ground tofore the ark of God upon his face, and the head and the two hands of Dagon were cut off. And there abode no more but the trunk only in the place. And God showed many vengeances to them of the country as long as the

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ark was with them, for God smote them with sickness in their secret parts, and wells boiled in towns and fields of that region, and there grew among them so many mice, that they suffered great persecution and confusion in that city. The people seeing this vengeance and plague said: Let not the ark of the God of Israel abide longer with us, for his hand is hard on us and on Dagon our god, and sent for the great masters and governors of the Philistines, and when they were gathered they said: What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered: Let it be led all about the cities, and so it was, and a great vengeance and death was had upon all the cities, and smote every man with plague from the most to the least; in such wise that the nether parts of them putrified and rotted off them, and that they made to them seats of furs and skins to sit soft. And then they sent the ark of God into Acheron and when they of Acheron saw the ark, they cried saying: They have brought the ark of the God of Israel to us, for to slay us and our people. They cried that the ark should be sent home again, for much people were dead by the vengeance that was taken on them in their secret parts, and a great howling and wailing was among them. The ark was in the region of the Philistines seven months. After this they counselled with their priests what they should do with the ark, and it was concluded it should be sent home again, but the priests said: If ye send it home, send it not void, but what ye owe pay for your trespass and sin, and then ye shall be healed and cured of your sicknesses. And so they ordained after the number of the five provinces of the Philistines, five pieces of gold and five mice of gold, and led to a wain and put in it two wild

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kine, which never bare yoke, and said, Leave their calves at home and take the ark and set it on the wain, and also the vessels and pieces of gold that ye have paid for your trespass, set them at the side of the ark and let them go where they will, and thus they sent the ark of God unto the children of Israel.

Samuel then governed Israel long, and when he was old he set his sons judges on Israel, whose names were Joel and Abiah. And these two his sons walked not in his ways, but declined after covetise and took gifts and perverted justice and doom. Then assembled and gathered together all the greatest of birth of the children of Israel, and came to Samuel and said: Lo! thou art old and thy sons walk not in thy ways, wherefore ordain to us a king that may judge and rule us like as all other nations have. This displeased much to Samuel when they said, Ordain on us a king. Then Samuel counselled on this matter with our Lord, to whom God said: Hear the voice of the people that speak to thee: they have not cast only thee away, but me, that I should not reign on them, for they do now like as they ever have done sith I brought them out of Egypt unto this day; that is that they have served false gods and strange, and so do they to thee. Notwithstanding hear them, and tell to them tofore, the right of the king, and how he shall oppress them.

Samuel told all this to the people that demanded to have a king, and said: This shall be the right of a king that shall reign on you. He shall take your sons and make them his men of war, and set them in his chariots and shall make them his carters and riders of his horse in his chariots

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and carts, and shall ordain of them tribunes and centurions, earers and tillers of his fields, and mowers and reapers of his corn, and he shall make them smiths, and armourers of harness and cars, and he shall also take your daughters and make them his unguentaries, and ready at his will and pleasure; he shall also take from you your fields and vineyards and the best olives and give them to his servants, and he shall task and dime your corn and sheaves, and the rents of your vineyards he shall value for to give to his officers and servants, and shall take from you your servants, both men and women, and set them to his works. And your asses and beasts he also shall take to his labour, your flocks of sheep he shall task and take the tenth or what shall please him, and ye shall be to him thrall and servants. And ye shall cry then wishing to flee from the face of your king, and our Lord shall not hear you nor deliver you because ye have asked for you a king. Yet for all this the people would not hear Samuel, but said: Give to us a king, for a king shall reign on us, and we shall be as all other people be. And our king shall judge us and go before us, and he shall fight our battles for us. And Samuel heard all and counselled with our Lord. To whom God commanded to ordain to them a king, and so he did, for he took a man of the tribe of Benjamin whose name was Saul, a good man and chosen, and there was not a better among all the children of Israel, and he was higher of stature from the shoulder upward than any other of all the people. And Samuel anointed him king upon Israel, and said to him: Our Lord God hath anointed thee upon his heritage and ordained thee a prince, and thou shalt deliver his

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people from the hands of his enemies that be in the circuit and countries about, and so departed from him. And Samuel after this gathered the people together and said: Our Lord saith that he hath brought you from the land of Egypt, and saved you from the hands of all the kings that were your enemies and pursued you, and ye have forsaken our Lord God that hath only delivered you from all your evil and tribulations, and have said: Ordain upon us a king. Wherefore now stand every each in his tribe, and we shall lot who shall be our king. And the lot fell on the tribe of Benjamin, and in that tribe the lot fell upon Saul the son of Kish. And they sought him and could not find him, and it was told him that he was hid in his house at home, and the people ran thither and fetched him and set him amidst all the people. And he was higher than any of all the people from the shoulder upward. Then Samuel said to the people, Now ye see and behold whom our Lord hath chosen, for there is none like him of all the people. And then all the people cried: Vivat Rex, live the king. Samuel wrote the law of the realm to the people in a book, and put it tofore our Lord. Thus was Saul made the first king in Israel, and anon had much war, for on all sides men warred on the children of Israel, and he defended them, and Saul had divers battles and had victory.

Samuel came on a time to Saul and said God commanded him to fight against Amalek and that he should slay and destroy man, woman, and child, ox, cow, camel and ass and sheep, and spare nothing. Then Saul assembled his people and had two hundred thousand footmen and twenty thousand men of the tribe of Judah, and went forth and fought against Amalek and slew them, sauf he

saved Agag the King of Amalek alive, and all other he slew, but he spared the best flocks of sheep and of other beasts, and also good clothes, and wethers, and all that was good he spared, and whatsomever was foul he destroyed. And this was showed to Samuel by our Lord, saying: Me forthinketh that I have ordained Saul king upon Israel, for he hath forsaken me, and not fulfilled my commandments. Samuel was sorry herefor, and wailed all the night. On the morn he rose and came to Saul, and Saul offered sacrifice to our Lord of the pillage that he had taken. And Samuel demanded of Saul what noise that was he heard of sheep and beasts, and he said that they were of the beasts that the people had brought from Amalek to offer unto our Lord, and the residue were slain. They have spared the best and fattest for to do sacrifice with unto thy Lord God. Then said Samuel to Saul: Rememberest thou not that whereas thou wert least among the tribes of Israel thou wert made upperest? And our Lord anointed thee, and made thee king. And he said to thee: Go and slay the sinners of Amalek and leave none alive, man ne beast; why hast thou not obeyed the commandment of our Lord? And hast run to robbery and done evil in the sight of God? And then said Saul to Samuel: I have taken Agag, king of the Amalekites, and brought him with me, but I have slain Amalek. The people have taken of the sheep and beasts of the best for to offer unto our Lord God. And then said Samuel: Trowest thou that our Lord would rather have sacrifice and offerings than not to obey his commandments? Better is obedience than sacrifice, and better it is to take heed to do

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after thy Lord than to offer the fat kidneys of the wethers. For it is a sin to withstand and to repugn against his Lord like the sin of idolatry. And because thou hast not obeyed our Lord, and cast away his word, our Lord hath cast thee away that thou shalt not be king. Then said Saul to Samuel: I have sinned for I have not obeyed the word of God and thy words, but have dreaded the people and obeyed to their request, but I pray thee to bear my sin and trespass and return with me that I may worship our Lord. And Samuel answered, I shall not return with thee. And so Samuel departed, and yet ere he departed, he did do slay Agag the king. And Samuel saw never Saul after unto his death.

Then our Lord bade Samuel to go and anoint one of the sons of Isai, otherwise called Jesse, to be king of Israel. And so he came into Bethlehem unto Jesse and bade him bring his sons tofore him. This Jesse had eight sons, he brought tofore Samuel seven of them, and Samuel said there was not he that he would have. Then he said that there was no more, save one which was youngest and yet a child, and kept sheep in the field. And Samuel said: Send for him, for I shall eat no bread till he come. And so he was sent for and brought. He was ruddy and fair of visage and well favoured, and Samuel arose, and took an horn with oil and anointed him in the middle of his brethren. And forthwith the spirit of our Lord came directly in him that same day and ever after. Then Samuel departed and came in to Ramah. And the spirit of our Lord went away from Saul and an evil spirit oft vexed him. Then his servants said to him: Thou oft art vexed with an evil spirit, it were good to have one that could

harp, to be with thee when the spirit vexeth thee, thou shalt bear it the lighter And he said to his servants: Provide ye to me such one. And then one said: I saw one of Jesse's sons play on a harp, a fair child and strong, wise in his talking and our Lord is with him. Then Saul sent messages to Jesse for David, and Jesse sent David his son with a present of bread, wine, and a kid, to Saul. And always when the evil spirit vexed Saul, David harped tofore him and anon he was eased, and the evil spirit went his way. The History of Saul

After this the Philistines gathered them into great hosts to make war against Saul and the children of Israel, and Saul gathered the children of Israel together and came against them in the vale of Terebinthe. The Philistines stood upon the hill on that other part, and the valley was between them. And there came out of the host of the Philistines a great giant named Goliath of Gath; he was six cubits high and a palm, and a helmet of brass on his head, and was clad in a habergeon. The weight of his habergeon was of five thousand shekels of weight of metal. He had boots of brass on his calves, and his shoulders were covered with plates of brass. His glaive was as a great colestaff, and there was thereon six shekels of iron, and his squire went tofore him and cried against them of Israel, and said they should choose a man to fight a singular battle against Goliath, and if he were overcome the Philistines should be servants to Israel, and if he prevailed and overcame his enemy, they of Israel should serve the Philistines, and thus he did cry forty days long. Saul and the children of Israel were sore afraid. David was at this time in Bethlehem with his father, and kept sheep, and three of his brethren

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were in the host with Saul. To whom Jesse said: David, take this pottage, ten loaves of bread, and ten cheeses, and go run unto the host to thy brethren, and see how they do, and learn how they be arrayed. David delivered his sheep to one to keep them, and bare these things unto the host. And when he came thither he heard a great cry, and he demanded after his brethren. And that same time came forth that giant Goliath and said, as he had done tofore, and David heard him speak. All they of Israel fled for fear of him, and David demanded what he was, and it was told him that he was come to destroy Israel, and also that what man that might slay him, the king should enrich him with great riches, and should give to him his daughter, and shall make the house of his father without tribute. And David said: What is this uncircumcised that hath despised the host of the God of Israel? And what reward shall he have that shall slay him? And the people said as afore is said. And when his oldest brother heard him speak to the people he was wroth with him, and said: Wherefore art thou come hither and hast left the few sheep in desert. I know well thy pride, thou art come for to see the battle. And David said: What have I done? Is it not as the people said? I dare fight well with this giant; and declined from his brother to other of the people. And all this was showed to Saul, and David was brought to him, and said to Saul: I, thy servant, shall fight against this giant if thou wilt. And Saul said to him: Thou mayst not withstand this Philistine nor fight against him, for thou art but a child; this giant hath been a fighter from his childhood. David said to Saul: I thy servant kept my father's sheep, and there

came a lion and a bear and took away a wether from the middle of my flock, and I pursued after, and took it again from their mouths, and they arose and would have devoured me, and I caught them by the jaws and slew them. I thy servant slew the lion and the bear, therefore this Philistine uncircumcised shall be as one of them. I shall now go and deliver Israel from this opprobrium and shame. How is this Philistine uncircumcised so hardy as to curse the host of the living God? And yet said David: The Lord that kept me from the might of the lion and from the strength of the bear, he will deliver me from the power of this Philistine. Saul said then to David: Go, and our Lord be with thee. Saul did do arm him with his armour, and girded his sword about him. And when he was armed, David said: I may not ne cannot fight thus, for I am not accustomed ne used, and unarmed him, and took his staff that he had in his hand, and chose to him five good round stones from the brook and put them in his bag, and took a sling in his hand, and went forth against the giant. And when Goliath saw him come, he despised him and said: Weenest thou that I am a hound that comest with thy staff to me? And he cursed David by his gods, and said to David: Come hither and I shall give thy flesh to the fowls of heaven and to the beasts of the earth. David said unto Goliath: Thou comest to me with thy sword and glaive, and I come to thee in the name of the Lord God of the host of Israel which thou hast this day despised; and that Lord shall give thee in my hand, and I shall slay thee and smite off thy head. And I shall give this day the bodies of the men of war of the Philistines to the fowls of heaven, and to the beasts of the earth. Then

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Goliath rose and hied towards David, and David on that other side hied, and took a stone and laid it in his sling, and threw it at the giant, and smote him in the forehead in such wise that the stone was fixed there, in that he fell down on his visage. Thus prevailed David against the Philistine with his sling and stone, and smote him and slew him. And he had no sword but he went and took Goliath's own sword and therewith smote off his head. And then the Philistines seeing this giant thus slain, fled, and the Israelites after followed, and slew many of them, and returned again and came into the tents, pavilions and lodgings of the Philistines, and took all the pillage.

David took the head of Goliath and brought it into Jerusalem, and his arms he brought into his tabernacle. And Abner brought David, having the head of Goliath in his hand, tofore Saul. And Saul demanded of him of what kindred that he was, and he said that he was son of Jesse of Bethlehem, and forthwith that same time Jonathan, the son of Saul, loved David as his own soul. Saul then would not give him licence to return to his father, and Jonathan and he were confederate and swore each of them to be true to other, for Jonathan gave his coat that he was clad withal, and all his other garments, unto his sword and spear, unto David. And David did all that ever Saul bade him do wisely and prudently. And when he returned from the battle, and Goliath was slain, the women came out from every town singing with choirs and timpanes against the coming of Saul with great joy and gladness, saying: Saul hath slain a thousand and David hath slain ten thousand. And this saying displeased much to Saul, which said: They have given to David ten thousand and to me one

thousand; what may he more have save the realm, and to be king? For this cause Saul never loved David after that day, ne never looked on him friendly but ever sought means afterward to destroy David, for he dreaded that David should be lord with him, and put him from him. And David was wise and kept him well from him. And after this he wedded Michal, daughter of Saul, and Jonathan made oft times peace between Saul and David, yet Saul kept no promise, but ever lay in wait to slay David. And Jonathan warned David thereof. And David gat him a company of men of war to the number of four hundred, and kept him in the mountains. **The History of Saul**

And on a time David was at home with his wife Michal, and Saul sent thither men of war to slay him in his house in the morning; and when Michal heard thereof, she said to David: But if thou save thyself this night, to-morn thou shalt die, and she let him out by a window by which he escaped and saved himself. Michal took an image and laid in his bed, and a rough skin of a goat on the head of the image, and covered it with clothes. And on the morn Saul sent spies for David, and it was answered to them that he lay sick in his bed. Then after this sent Saul messengers for to see David, and said to them: Bring him to me in his bed that he may be slain. And when the messengers came they found a simulachre or an image in his bed, and goats' skins on the head. Then said Saul to Michal his daughter: Why hast thou mocked me so, and hast suffered mine enemy to flee? And Michal answered to Saul and said: He said to me: Let me go or I shall slay thee.

David went to Samuel in Rama and told him all that Saul had done to him. And it was told to

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Saul that David was with Samuel, and he sent thither messengers to take him. And when they came they found them with the company of prophets, and they sat and prophesied with them. And he sent more. And they did also so. And the third time he sent more messengers. And they also prophesied. And then Saul being wroth asked where Samuel and David were, and went to them, and he prophesied when he came also, and took off his clothes and was naked all that day and night before Samuel. David then fled from thence and came to Jonathan and complained to him saying: What have I offended that thy father seeketh to slay me? Jonathan was sorry therefore, for he loved well David. After this Saul ever sought for to slay David. And on a time Saul went into a cave for to ease him, and David was within the cave, to whom his squire said: Now hath God brought thine enemy into thine hand; now go and slay him. And David said: God forbid that I should lay any hand on him, he is anointed. I shall never hurt ne grieve him, let God do his pleasure. And he went to Saul and cut off a gobet of his mantle and kept it. And when Saul was gone out, soon after issued David out and cried to Saul saying: Lo! Saul, God hath brought thee into my hands. I might have slain thee if I had would, but God forbade that I should lay hand on thee, my lord anointed of God. And what have I offended that thou seekest to slay me? Who art thou? said Saul. Art thou not David my son? Yes, said David, I am thy servant, and kneeled down and worshipped him. Then said Saul: I have sinned, and wept and also said: Thou art rightfuller than I am, thou hast done to me good, and I have done to thee evil. And thou hast well showed to me this day that God had

brought me into thine hand, and thou hast not slain me. God reward thee for this, that thou hast done to me; now know I well that thou shalt reign in Israel. I pray thee to be friendly to my seed, and destroy not my house, and swear and promise me that thou take not away my name from the house of my father; and David sware and promised to Saul. And then Saul departed and went home, and David and his people went in to surer places. Anon after this Samuel died, and was buried in his house in Rama. And all Israel bewailed him greatly. Then there was a rich man in the mount of Carmel that hight Nabal, and on a time he sheared and clipped his sheep, to whom David sent certain men, and bade them say that David greeted him well, and whereas aforetimes his shepherds kept his sheep in desert, he never was grievous to them, ne they lost not so much as a sheep as long as they were with us, and that he might ask his servants for they could tell, and that he would now in their need send them what it pleased him. Nabal answered to the children of David: Who is that David? Trow ye that I shall send the meat that I have made ready for them that shear my sheep and send it to men that I know not? The men returned and told to David all that he had said. Then said David to his men: Let every man take his sword and gird him withal, and David took his sword and girt him. And David went and four hundred men followed him, and he left two hundred behind him. One of the servants of Nabal told to Abigail, Nabal's wife, how that David had sent messengers from the desert unto his lord, and how wroth and wayward he was, and also he said that those men were good enough to them when they were in

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desert, ne never perished beast of ours as long as they were there. They were a wall and a shield for us both day and night all the time that we kept our flocks there, wherefore consider what is to be done. They purpose to do harm to him and to his house, for he is the son of Belial in such wise that no man may speak with him. Then Abigail hied her and took two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred bottles of wine, five wethers sodden, and five measures of pottage, and one hundred bonds of grapes dried, and two hundred masses of caricares, and laid all this upon asses, and said to her servants: Go ye tofore, and I shall follow after. She told hereof nothing to her husband Nabal. Then she took an ass and rode after, and when she came to the foot of the hill, David and his men descended; to whom she ran, and David said: I have for naught saved all the beasts of this Nabal in desert, and there perished nothing of his that pertained to him, and he hath yielded evil for good. By the living God I shall not leave as much of his alive as shall piss against a wall. As soon as Abigail saw David she descended from her ass, and fell down tofore David, upon her visage and worshipped him on the earth, and fell down to his feet and said: In me, said she, my lord, be this wickedness, I beseech thee that I thine handmaiden may speak to thine ears, and that thou wilt hear the words of me thy servant. I pray and require thee my lord, let not thy heart be set against this wicked man Nabal, for according to his name he is a fool, and folly is with him. I thine handmaid saw not thy children that thou sendedst. Now therefore, my lord, for the love of God and of thy soul, suffer not thy hand to shed no blood, and I beseech God that thine enemies may be like Nabal and they that

would thee harm; and I beseech thee to receive this blessing and present which I thine handmaid have brought to thee, my lord, and give it to thy men that follow thee, my lord. Take away the wickedness from me thy servant, and I beseech God to make to thee, my lord, a house of truth, for thou, my lord, shalt fight the battles of our Lord God; and let no malice be found in thee, never in all the days of thy life. If ever any man arise against thee or would pursue or would hurt thee, I beseech God to keep thee. And when our Lord God hath accomplished to thee, my lord, all that he hath spoken good of thee, and hath constituted thee duke upon Israel, let this not be in thy thought, ne scruple in thy heart that thou shouldest shed blood not guilty, ne be thou not now avenged. And when our Lord God hath done well to thee, my lord, have thou remembrance on me thine handmaid, and do well to me. And David said to Abigail: Blessed be God of Israel that sent thee this day to meet me, and blessed be thy speech, and blessed be thou that hast withdrawn me from bloodshedding, and that I avenged me not on mine enemy with mine hand, else by the living God of Israel, if thou hadst not come unto me, there should not have blyven unto Nabal to-morn in the morning one pissing against a wall. Then David received all that she brought and said to her: Go peaceably into thine house, lo! I have heard thy voice and I have honoured thy visage; and so Abigail came unto Nabal, and David returned into the place he came from. Nabal made a great feast in his house, like the feast of a king, and the heart of Nabal was jocund; he was drunken, and Abigail his wife told to him no word till on the morn, little ne much. On the morn when Nabal had digested the wine,

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his wife told him all these words. And his heart was mortified within him, and he was dead like a stone, for the tenth day after, our Lord smote him and he died. And when David heard that he was dead, he said: Blessed be the good Lord that hath judged the cause of mine opprobrium from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept me his servant from harm, and our Lord hath yielded the malice of Nabal on his own head. Then David sent to Abigail for to have her to his wife, and she humbled herself and said she his handmaid was ready to wash the feet of his servants. And she arose and took with her five maidens which went afoot by her, and she rode upon an ass, and followed the messengers, and was made wife to David. And David also took another wife called Ahinoam of Jezreel, and both two were his wives.

After this Saul alway sought David for to slay him. And the people called Zyphites told to Saul that David was hid in the hill of Hachilah which was on the after part of the wilderness, and Saul took with him three thousand chosen men and followed and sought David. David when he heard of the coming of Saul went into the place whereas Saul was, and when he was asleep he took one with him and went into the tent where Saul slept, and Abner with him and all his people. Then said Abishai to David: God hath put thine enemy this day in thine hands, now I shall go and smite him through with my spear, and then after that we shall have no need to dread him. And David said to Abishai: Slay him not; who may extend his hand into the anointed king of God and be innocent? And David said yet more: By the living God, but if God smite him or the days come that he shall die or perish in battle, God be merciful to

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me, as I shall not lay my hand on him that is anointed of our Lord. Now take the spear that standeth at his head, and the cup of water, and let us go. David took the spear and the cup and departed thence and there was not one that saw them ne awaked, for they slept all. Then when David was on the hill far from them, David cried to the people and to Abner, saying: Abner, shalt not thou answer? And Abner answered: Who art thou that cryest and wakest the king? And David said to Abner: Art thou not a man and there is none like thee in Israel? why hast thou not therefore kept thy lord the king? There is one of the people gone in to slay the king thy lord; by the living Lord it is not good that ye do, but be ye worthy to die because ye have not kept your lord anointed of our Lord. Now look and see where the king's spear is, and the cup of water that stood at his head. Saul knew the voice of David and said: Is not this thy voice, my son David? And David said: It is my voice, my lord king. For what cause dost thou, my lord, pursue me thy servant? what thing have I done and what evil have I committed with my hand? Thou seest well I might have slain thee if I would; God judge between thee and me. And Saul said: I have sinned, return, my son; I shall never hereafter do thee harm ne evil, for thy soul is precious in my sight this day. It appeareth now that I have done follily, and am ignorant in many things. Then said David: Lo! here is the spear of the king, let a child come fetch it, our Lord shall reward to every man after his justice and faith. Our Lord hath this day brought thee into my hands, and yet I would not lay mine hand on him that is anointed of our Lord. And like as thy

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soul is magnified this day in my sight, so be my soul magnified in the sight of God and deliver me from all anguish. Saul said then to David: Blessed be thou, my son David. And David went then his way, and Saul returned home again.

And David said in his heart: Sometime it might hap to me to fall and come into the hands of Saul, it is better I flee from him and save me in the land of the Philistines. And he went thence with six hundred men and came to Achish king of Gath and dwelled there. And when Saul understood that he was with Achish he ceased to seek him. And Achish delivered to David a town to dwell in named Ziklag.

After this the Philistines gathered and assembled much people against Israel. And Saul assembled all Israel and came unto Gilboa; and when Saul saw all the host of the Philistines, his heart dreaded and fainted sore, he cried for to have counsel of our Lord. And our Lord answered him not, ne by swevens ne by priests, ne by prophets. Then said Saul to his servants: Fetch to me a woman having a phiton, otherwise called a phitoness or a witch. And they said that there was such a woman in Endor. Saul then changed his habit and clothing, and did on other clothing, and went, and two men with him, and came to the woman by night, and made her by her craft to raise Samuel. And Samuel said to Saul: Why hast thou put me from my rest, for to arise? And Saul said: I am coarted thereto, for the Philistines fight against me, and God is gone from me, and will not hear me, neither by prophets, ne by swevens. And Samuel said: What askest thou of me when God is gone from thee and gone unto David? God shall do to thee as he hath said to

thee by me, and shall cut thy realm from thine hand, and shall give it to thy neighbour David. For thou hast not obeyed his voice, ne hast not done his commandment in Amalek; therefore thou shalt lose the battle and Israel shall be overthrown. To-morrow thou and thy children shall be with me, and our Lord shall suffer the children of Israel to fall in the hands of the Philistines. Anon then Saul fell down to the earth. The words of Samuel made him afeard and there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no bread of all that day, he was greatly troubled. Then the phitoness desired him to eat, and she slew a paschal lamb that she had, and dighted and set it tofore him, and bread. And when he had eaten he walked with his servants all that night. And on the morn the Philistines assailed Saul and them of Israel, and fought a great battle, and the men of Israel fled from the face of the Philistines, and many of them were slain in the mount of Gilboa. The Philistines smote in against Saul and his sons, and slew Jonathan and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, sons of Saul. And all the burden of the battle was turned on Saul, and the archers followed him and wounded him sore. Then said Saul to his squire: Pluck out thy sword and slay me, that these men uncircumcised come not and, scorning, slay me; and his squire would not for he was greatly afeard. Then Saul took his sword and slew himself, which thing when his squire saw, that is that Saul was dead, he took his sword and fell on it and was dead with him. Thus was Saul dead, and his three sons and his squire, and all his men that day together. Then the children of Israel that were thereabouts, and on that other side of Jordan, seeing that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul

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and his three sons were dead, left their cities and fled. The Philistines came and dwelled there; and the next day the Philistines went for to rifle and pillage them that were dead, and they found Saul and his three sons lying in the hill of Gilboa. And they cut off the head of Saul, and robbed him of his armour, and sent it into the land of the Philistines all about, that it might be showed in the temple of their idols, and unto the people; and set up his arms in the temple of Ashtaroth, and hung his body on the wall of Bethshan. And when the men that dwelt in Jabesh-Gilead saw what the Philistines had done unto Saul, all the strongest men of them arose and went all that night and took down the bodies of Saul and of his sons from the wall of Bethshan and burnt them, and took the bones and buried them in the wood of Jabesh-Gilead and fasted seven days.

Thus endeth the life of Saul which was first king upon Israel, and for disobedience of God's commandment was slain, and his heirs never reigned long after.

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Here followeth how David reigned after Saul, and governed Israel. Shortly taken out of the Bible, the most historial matters and but little touched.

After the death of Saul David returned from the journey that he had against Amalek. For whilst David had been out with Achish the king, they of Amalek had been in Ziklag and taken all that was therein prisoners, and robbed and carried away with them the two wives of David, and had

set fire and burnt the town. And when David came again home and saw the town burnt he pursued after, and by the conveying of one of them of Amalek that was left by the way sick, for to have his life he brought David upon the host of Amalek whereas they sat and ate and drank. And David smote on them with his meiny and slew down all that he found, and rescued his wives and all the good that they had taken, and took much more of them. And when he was come to Ziklag, the third day after there came one from the host of Saul, and told to David how that Israel had lost the battle, and how they were fled, and how Saul the king and Jonathan his son were slain. David said to the young man that brought these tidings: How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan be dead? And he answered it was so by adventure that I came upon the mount of Gilboa, and Saul rested upon his spear, and the horsemen and the chariots of the Philistines approached to himward, and he looked behind him and saw me, and called me, and said to me: Who art thou? And I said I am an Amalekite, and then he said: Stand upon me and slay me, for I am full of anguish, and yet my soul is in me. And I then standing on him slew him, knowing well that he might not live after the ruin. And I took the diadem from his head, and the armylle from his arm, which I have brought hither to thee, my lord. David took and rent his vestment, and all the men that were him, and wailed and sorrowed much the death of Saul and Jonathan and of all the men of Israel, and fasted that day till even. And David said to the young man: Of whence art thou? And he said: I am the son of an Amalekite. And David said to him: Why dreadedst thou not to put thy hand forth

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to slay him that is anointed of God? David called one of his men, and bade him slay him. And he smote him and slew him. And David said: Thy blood be on thy head! thine own mouth hath spoken against thee, saying: I have slain Saul which was king anointed of our Lord.

David sorrowed and bewailed much the death of Saul and of Jonathan. After this David counselled with our Lord and demanded if he should go in to one of the cities of Judah. And our Lord bade him go, and he asked whither, and our Lord said Into Hebron. Then David took his two wives and all the men that were with him, every each with his household, and dwelled in the towns of Hebron. And thither came the men of Judah and anointed David king to reign upon the tribe of Judah. And Abner prince of the host of Saul, and other servants of Saul, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and led him about, and made him king over Israel, except the tribe of Judah. Ishbosheth was forty years when he began to reign, and he reigned two years. The house of Judah only followed David. After this it happed that Abner, prince of the host of Ishbosheth, with certain men, went out of the castles, and Joab with certain men of David went also out and ran by the piscine of Gibeon. One party was on that one side, and that other on the other. And Abner said to Joab: Let our young men play and skirmish together, and Joab agreed. And there rose twelve of Benjamin, of the party of Ishbosheth, and twelve of the children of David; and when they met together each took other by the head, and roof their swords into each other's sides and were all there slain. And there arose a great battle, and Abner and his fellowship were put to

flight by the men of David. And among all other there was Asahel one of the brethren of Joab and was the swiftest runner that might be, and pursued Abner, and Abner looked behind him, and bade him decline on the right side or on the left side, and take one of the young men and his harness, and come not at me. Asahel would not leave him; yet Abner said to him: Go from me and follow not me lest I be compelled to slay thee, and then I may not make my peace with Joab thy brother. Which would not hear Abner, but despised him, and Abner then turned and slew him in the same place, and anon the sun went down and they withdrew. There were slain of the children of David nineteen men and of them of Benjamin three hundred and sixty were slain, and thus there was long strife and contention between the house of David and the house of Ishbosheth. After this Abner took a concubine of Saul and held her, wherefore Ishbosheth reproved him of it and Abner was wroth greatly thereof; and came to David and made friendship with him. Joab was not there when Abner made his peace with David; but when he knew it he came to Abner with a fair semblant and spake fair to him by dissimulation, and slew him for to avenge the death of Asahel his brother. And when David heard how Joab had slain Abner he cursed him, and bewailed greatly the death of Abner, and did do bury him honorably and David followed the bier himself. And when Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, heard that Abner was dead, he was all abashed and all Israel sore troubled. There were two princes of thieves with Ishbosheth named Baanah and Rechab, which came on a day in to Ishbosheth where he lay and slept, and there they slew

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him, and took privily his head and brought it in to David in Hebron and said: Lo, here is the head of thine enemy Ishbosheth, that sought to slay thee; this day God hath given to thee my lord vengeance of Saul and of his seed. David answered to them: By the living God that hath delivered me from all anguish, him that told me that he had slain Saul, and had thought to have had a reward of me, I did do slay, how much more ye that be so wicked to slay him that is not guilty, in his house and upon his bed? Shall I not ask his blood of your hands, and throw you out of this world? Yes, certainly. And David commanded to his servants to slay them, and so they were slain, and cut off their hands and feet, and hung them on the piscine in Hebron, and took the head of Ishbosheth and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner. And then came all the tribes of Israel to David in Hebron, saying: We be thy mouth and thy flesh, when Saul lived and was king on us and reigned, thou wert coming and going; and because God hath said thou shalt reign upon my people and be their governor, therefore we shall obey thee. And all the seniors of Israel came and did homage to David in Hebron, and anointed him king over them.

David was thirty years old when he began to reign and he reigned forty years. He reigned in Hebron upon Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years upon all Israel and Judah. David then made him a dwelling-place in the hill of Sion in Jerusalem. And after this the Philistines made war against him but he oft overthrew them, and slew many of them, and made them tributary to him, and after brought the ark of God in Jerusalem, and set it in

his house. After this yet the Philistines made war again unto him and other kings were aiding and helping them against David, whom David overcame and slew and put under. The History of David

And on a time when Joab was out with his men of war lying at a siege tofore a city, David was at home, and walked in his chamber, and as he looked out at a window he saw a fair woman wash her and bain her in her chamber, which stood against his house, and demanded of his servants who she was, and they said she was Uriah's wife. He sent for her and lay by her and gat her with child. And when David understood that she was with child, he sent letters to Joab and bade him to send home to him Uriah; and Joab sent Uriah to David, and David demanded how the host was ruled, and after bade him go home to his house and wash his feet. And Uriah went thence, and the king sent to him his dish with meat. Uriah would not go home, but lay before the gate of the king's house with other servants of the king's. And it was told to the king that Uriah went not home, and then David said to Uriah: Thou comest from a far way, why goest thou not home? And Uriah said to David: The ark of God and Israel and Judah be in the pavilions, and my lord Joab and the servants of thee, my lord, lie on the ground, and would ye that I should go to my house and eat and drink, and sleep with my wife? By thy health and by the health of my soul I shall not do so. Then David said to Uriah, Abide here then this night, and to-morrow I shall deliver thee. Uriah abode there that day and the next, and David made him eat tofore him and made him drunk, yet for all that he would not go home, but lay with the servants of David. Then on the morn

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David wrote a letter to Joab, that he should set Uriah in the weakest place of the battle and where most jeopardy was, and that he should be left there that he might be slain. And Uriah bare this letter to Joab, and it was so done as David had written, and Uriah was slain in the battle. And Joab sent word to David how they had fought, and how Uriah was slain and dead. When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned and wailed him; and after the mourning David sent for her and wedded her, and she bare him a son. And this that David had committed on Uriah displeased greatly our Lord.

Then our Lord sent Nathan the prophet unto David, which, when he came, said to him: There were two men dwelling in a city, that one rich and that other poor. The rich man had sheep and oxen right many, but the poor man had but one little sheep, which he bought and nourished and grew with his children, eating of his bread and drinking of his cup, and slept in his bosom. She was to him as a daughter. And on a time when a certain pilgrim came to the rich man, he, sparing his own sheep and oxen to make a feast to the pilgrim that was come to him, took the only sheep of the poor man and made meat thereof to his guest. David was wroth and said to Nathan: By the living God, the man that hath so done is the child of death, the man that hath so done shall yield therefor four times double. Then said Nathan to David: Thou art the same man that hath done this thing. This said the Lord God of Israel: I have anointed thee king upon Israel, and I have kept thee from the hand of Saul, and I have given to thee an house to keep in thine house-

hold and wives in thy bosom. I have given to thee the house of Israel and the house of Judah, and if these be small things I shall add and give to thee much more and greater. Why hast thou therefore despised the word of God and hast done evil in the sight of our Lord? Thou hast slain Uriah with a sword, and his wife hast thou taken unto thy wife, and thou hast slain him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. Therefore the sword shall not go from thy house, world without end, forasmuch as thou hast despised me and hast taken Uriah's wife unto thy wife. This said our Lord: I shall raise evil against thee, and shall take thy wives in thy sight and give them to thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives tofore thine eyes. Thou hast done it privily, but I shall make this to be done and open in the sight of all Israel. And then said David to Nathan: Peccavi! I have sinned against our Lord. Nathan said: Our Lord hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die, but for as much as thou hast made the enemy to blaspheme the name of God, therefore the son that is born to thee shall die by death. And Nathan returned to his house. And for this sin David made this psalm: Miserere mei deus, which is a psalm of mercy, for David did great penance for these sins of adultery and also of homicide. **The History of David**

For as I once was beyond the sea riding in the company of a noble knight named Sir John Capons, and was also doctor in both laws, and was born in Malyorke, and had been viceroy and governor of Arragon and Catalonia, and that time counsellor unto the Duke of Burgundy, Charles, it happed we communed of the history of David; and this said nobleman told me that he had read that David

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did this penance following for these said sins. That he dolved him in the ground standing naked unto the head, so long that the worms began to creep in his flesh, and made a verse of this psalm Miserere, and then came out, and when he was whole thereof he went in again and stood so again as long as afore is said and made the second verse, and so as many times he was dolven in the earth as be verses in the said psalm of Miserere mei deus, and every time was abiding therein till he felt the worms creep in his flesh. This was a great penance and a token of a great repentance, for there be in the psalm twenty-one verses, and twenty-one times he was dolven. Thus this nobleman told me, riding between the town of Ghent in Flanders and the town of Brussels in Brabant.

Therefore God took away this sin, and forgave it him, but the son that she brought forth died. And after this Bathsheba, that had been Uriah's wife, conceived and brought forth another son named Solomon, which was well-beloved of God, and after David, Solomon was king.

After this David had much war and trouble and anger, in so much that on a time Amnon, oldest son of David, loved Thamar his sister. This Thamar was Absalom's sister by the mother's side, and Amnon forced and lay by her, and when he had done his pleasure, he hated her, and threw her out of his chamber, and she complained unto Absalom. David knew hereof, and was right sorry for it, but he would not rebuke his son Amnon for it, for he loved him because he was his first begotten son. Absalom hated Amnon ever after, and when Absalom on a time did do shear his sheep he prayed all his brethren to come eat with him, and made them a feast like a

king's feast. At which feast he did do slay his brother Amnon; and anon it was told to the King David that Absalom had slain all the king's sons. Wherefore the king was in great heaviness and sorrow, but anon after it was told him that there was no more slain but Amnon, and the other sons came home. And Absalom fled into Geshur, and was there three years, and durst not come home. And after by the moyen of Joab he was sent for, and came into Jerusalem, but yet he might not come in his father the king's presence, and dwelled there two years, and might not see the King his father. This Absalom was the fairest man that ever was, for from the sole of his foot unto his head there was not a spot; he had so much hair on his head that it grieved him to bear, wherefore it was shorn off once a year, it weighed two hundred shekels of good weight. Then when he abode so long that he might not come to his father's presence he sent for Joab to come speak with him, and he would not come. He sent again for him and he came not. Then Absalom said to his servants: Know ye Joab's field that lieth by my field? They said yea. Go ye, said he, and set fire in the barley that is therein, and burn it. And Joab's servants came and told to Joab that Absalom had set fire on his corn. Then Joab came to Absalom and said: Why hast thou set fire on my corn! And he said, I have sent twice to thee, praying thee to come to me that I might send thee to the king, and that thou shouldst say to him why I came from Geshur; it had been better for me for to have abiden there. I pray thee that I may come to his presence and see his visage, and if he remember my wickedness let him slay me. Joab

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went in to the King and told to him all these words. Then was Absalom called, and entered in to the king, and he fell down and worshipped the king, and the king kissed him. After this Absalom did do make for himself chariots and horsemen and fifty men for to go before him, and walked among the tribes of Israel; and greeted and saluted them, taking them by the hand, and kissed them, by which he gat to him the hearts of the people; and said to his father that he had avowed to make sacrifice to God in Hebron, and his father gave him leave. And when he was there he gathered people to him, and made himself king, and did do cry that all men should obey and wait on him as king of Israel. When David heard this he was sore abashed and was fain to flee out of Jerusalem. And Absalom came with his people and entered into Jerusalem into his father's house, and lay by his father's concubines, and after pursued his father to depose him. And David ordained his people and battle against him, and sent Joab, prince of his host, against Absalom, and divided his host into three parts, and would have gone with them, but Joab counselled that he should not go to the battle whatsomever happed, and then David bade them to save his son Absalom.

And they went forth and fought, and Absalom with his host was overthrown and put to flight. And as Absalom fled upon his mule he came under an oak, and his hair flew about a bough of the tree and held so fast that Absalom hung by his hair, and the mule ran forth. There came one to Joab and told him how that Absalom hung by his hair on a bough of an oak, and Joab said: Why hast thou not slain him? The man said: God forbid

that I should set hand on the king's son; I heard the king say: keep my son Absalom alive and slay him not. Then Joab went and took three spears, and fixed them in the heart of Absalom as he hung on the tree by his hair, and yet after this ten young men, squires of Joab, ran and slew him. Then Joab trumped and blew the retreat, and retained the people that they should not pursue the people flying. And they took the body of Absalom and cast it in a great pit, and laid on him a great stone. And when David knew that his son was slain, he made great sorrow and said: O my son Absalom, my son Absalom, who shall grant to me that I may die for thee, my son Absalom, Absalom my son! It was told to Joab that the king wept and sorrowed the death of his son Absalom, and all their victory was turned into sorrow and wailing, in so much that the people eschewed to enter into the city. Then Joab entered into the king and said: Thou hast this day discouraged the cheer of all thy servants because they have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and daughters, of thy wives and of thy concubines, thou lovest them that hate thee, and hatest them that love thee, and showest well this day that thou settest little by thy dukes and servants; and truly I know now well that if Absalom had lived and all we thy servants had been slain, thou haddest been pleased. Therefore, arise now and come forth and satisfy the people; or else I swear to thee by the good lord that there shall not one of thy servants abide with thee till to-morrow, and that shall be worse to thee than all the harms and evils that ever yet fell to thee. Then David the king arose and sat in the gate, and anon it was shown to all the people that the king

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The History of David

sat in the gate. And then all the people came in tofore the king, and they of Israel that had been with Absalom fled into their tabernacles, and after came again unto David when they knew that Absalom was dead.

And after, one Sheba, a cursed man, rebelled and gathered people against David. Against whom Joab with the host of David pursued, and drove him unto a city which he besieged, and by the means of a woman of the same city Sheba's head was smitten off and delivered to Joab over the wall, and so the city was saved, and Joab pleased. After this David called Joab, and bade him number the people of Israel, and so Joab walked through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and over Jordan and all the country, and there were founden in Israel eight hundred thousand strong men that were able to fight and to draw sword, and of the tribe of Judah fifty thousand fighting men. And after that the people was numbered, the heart of David was smitten by our Lord and was heavy, and said: I have sinned greatly in this deed, but I pray the Lord to take away the wickedness of thy servant, for I have done follily. David rose on the morn early, and the word of our Lord came to Gad the prophet saying: that he should go to David and bid him choose one of three things that he should say to him. When Gad came to David he said that he should choose whether he would have seven years hunger in his land, or three months he should flee his adversaries and enemies, or to have three days pestilence. Of these three God biddeth thee choose which thou wilt; now advise thee and conclude what I shall answer to our Lord. David said to Gad: I am constrained to a great thing,

but it is better for me to put me in the hands of our Lord, for his mercy is much more than in men, and so he chose pestilence.

Then our Lord sent pestilence the time constitute, and there died of the people from Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand men. And when the angel extended his hand upon Jerusalem for to destroy it, our Lord was merciful upon the affliction, and said to the angel so smiting: It sufficeth now, withdraw thy hand. David said to our Lord when he saw the angel smiting the people: I am he that have sinned and done wickedly, what have these sheep done? I beseech thee that thy hand turn upon me and upon the house of my father. Then came Gad to David and bade him make an altar in the same place where he saw the angel; and he bought the place, and made the altar, and offered sacrifices unto our Lord, and our Lord was merciful, and the plague ceased in Israel.

David was old and feeble and saw that his death approached, and ordained that his son Solomon should reign and be king after him. Howbeit that Adonijah his son took on him to be king during David's life. For which cause Bathsheba and Nathan came to David, and tofore them he said that Solomon should be king, and ordained that he should be set on his mule by his prophets Nathan, Zadok the priest and Benaiah, and brought in to Sion. And there Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed him king upon Israel and blew in a trump and said: Live the King Solomon. And from thence they brought him into Jerusalem and set him upon his father's seat in his father's throne, and David worshipped him in his bed, and said: Blessed be

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the Lord God of Israel that hath suffered me to see my son in my throne and seat. And then Adonijah and all they that were with him were afeard, and dreading Solomon ran away, and so ceased Adonijah. The days of David approached fast that he should die, and did do call Solomon before him, and there he commanded him to keep the commandments of our Lord and walk in his ways, and to observe his ceremonies, his precepts and his judgments, as it is written in the law of Moses, and said: Our Lord confirm thee in thy reign, and send to thee wisdom to rule it well. And when David had thus counselled and commanded him to do justice and keep God's law, he blesssd him and died, and was buried with his fathers. This David was an holy man and made the holy psalter, which is an holy book and is contained therein the old law and the new law. He was a great prophet, for he prophesied the coming of Christ, his nativity, his passion, and resurrection, and also his ascension, and was great with God, yet God would not suffer him to build a temple for him, for he had shed man's blood. But God said to him, his son that should reign after him should be a man peaceable, and he should build the temple to God. And when David had reigned forty years king of Jerusalem, over Judah and Israel, he died in good mind, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David.

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After David, reigned Solomon his son, which was in the beginning a good man and walked in the ways and laws of God. And all the kings about him made peace with him and was king confirmed,

obeyed and peaceable in his possession, and according to his father's commandment did justice. First on Joab that had been prince of his father's host, because he slew two good men by treason and guile, that was Abner the son of Ner, and Amasa the son of Ithra. And Joab was afeard and dreaded Solomon, and fled into the Tabernacle of our Lord and held the end of the altar And Solomon sent Benaiah and slew him there, and after buried him in his house in desert. And after this on a night as he lay in his bed after he had sacrificed to our Lord in Gibeon, our Lord appeared to him in his sleep saying to him: Ask and demand what thou wilt that I may give to thee. And Solomon said: Lord, thou hast done to my father great mercy; because he walked in thy ways in truth, justice, and a rightful heart, thou hast always kept for him thy great mercy, and hast given to him a son sitting upon his throne as it is this day. And now Lord thou hast made me thy servant to reign for my father David. I am a little child and know not my going out and entering in, and I thy servant am set in the middle of the people that thou hast chosen which be infinite, and may not be numbered for multitude; therefore Lord give to me thy servant a heart docile and taught in wisdom that may judge thy people, and discern between good and evil. Who may judge this people, thy people that be so many? This request and demand pleased much unto God that Solomon had asked such a thing. And God said to Solomon: Because thou hast required and asked this and hast not asked long life, ne riches, ne the souls of thine enemies, but hast asked sapience and wisdom to discern doom and judgment, I have given to thee after thy desire and

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request, and I have given to thee a wise heart and understanding insomuch that there was never none such tofore, ne never after shall be. And also those things that thou hast not asked I have given also to thee, that is to say riches and glory, that no man shall be like to thee among all the kings that shall be after thy days. If thou walk in my ways and keep my precepts and observe my commandments as thy father walked, I shall make thy days long. After this Solomon awoke and came to Jerusalem, and stood tofore the Ark of our Lord and offered sacrifices and victims unto our Lord, and made a great feast unto all his servants and household. Then came tofore him two common women, of which that one said: I beseech thee my lord hear me; this woman and I dwelled together in one house, and I was delivered of a child in my cubicle, and the third day after she bare a child, and was also delivered, and we were together and none other in the house but we twain, and it was so that this woman's son was dead in the night; for she sleeping, overlaid and oppressed him, and she arose in the darkest of the night privily, and took my son from the side of me thy servant and laid him by her, and her son that was dead she laid by me. When I arose in the morning for to give milk to my son it appeared dead, whom I took beholding him diligently in the clear light, understood well anon that it was not my son that I had borne. The other woman answered and said: It was not so as thou sayest, but my son liveth and thine is dead. And contrary that other said: Thou liest; my son liveth and thine is dead. Thus in this wise they strove tofore the king. Then the king said: This woman saith my son liveth and thine is dead, and this answereth, Nay,

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but thy son is dead, and mine liveth. Then the king said: Bring to me here a sword. When they had brought forth a sword the king said: Divide ye, said he, the living child in two parts, and give that one half to that one, and that other half to that other. Then said the woman that was mother of the living child to the king, for all her members and bowels were moved upon her son: I beseech and pray thee, my lord, give to her the child alive, and slay him not, and contrary said that other woman: Let it not be given to me ne to thee, but let it be divided. The king then answered and said: Give the living child to this woman, and let it not be slain; this is verily the mother. All Israel heard how wisely the king had given this sentence and dreaded him, seeing that the wisdom of God was in him in deeming of rightful dooms.

After this Solomon sent his messengers to divers kings for cedar trees and for workmen, for to make and build a temple unto our Lord. Solomon was rich and glorious, and all the realms from the river of the ends of the Philistines unto the end of Egypt were accorded with him, and offered to him gifts and to serve him all the days of his life. Solomon had daily for the meat of his household thirty measures, named chores, of corn, and sixty of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen of pasture and an hundred wethers, without venison that was taken, as harts, goats, bubals, and other flying fowls and birds. He obtained all the region that was from Tiphsa unto Azza, and had peace with all the kings of all the realms that were in every part round about him. In that time Israel and Judah dwelled without fear and dread, every each under his vine and fig tree from Dan unto Beersheba.

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And Solomon had forty thousand racks for the horses of his carts, chariots and cars, and twelve thousand for horses to ride on, by which prefects brought necessary things for the table of king Solomon, with great diligence in their time. God gave to Solomon much wisdom and prudence in his heart, like to the gravel that is in the sea-side, and the sapience and wisdom of Solomon passed and went tofore the sapience of all them of the Orient and of Egypt, and he was the wisest of all men, and so he was named. He spake three thousand parables, and five thousand songs, and disputed upon all manner trees and virtue of them, from the cedar that is in Lebanon unto the hyssop that groweth on the wall, and discerned the properties of beasts, fowls, reptiles and fishes, and there came people from all regions of the world for to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

And Solomon sent letters to Hiram, king of Tyre, for to have his men to cut cedar trees with his servants, and he would yield to them their hire and meed, and let him wit how that he would build and edify a temple to our Lord. And Hiram sent to him that he should have all that he desired, and sent to him cedar trees and other wood. And Solomon sent to him corn in great number, and Solomon and Hiram confederated them together in love and friendship. Solomon chose out workmen of all Israel the number of thirty thousand men of whom he sent to Lebanon ten thousand every month, and when ten thousand went the others came home, and so two months were they at home, and Adonias was overseer and commander on them. Solomon had seventy thousand men that did nothing but bear stone and mortar and other things to the edifying of the

temple, and were bearers of burdens only, and he had eighty thousand of hewers of stone and masons in the mountain, without the prefects and masters, which were three thousand three hundred that did nothing but command and oversee them that wrought. Solomon commanded the workmen to make square stones, great and precious, for to lay in the foundament, which the masons of Israel and masons of Hiram hewed, and the carpenters made ready the timber. Then began Solomon the temple to our Lord, in the fourth year of his reign he began to build the temple. The house that he builded had seventy cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and thirty in height, and the porch tofore the temple was twenty cubits long after the measure of the breadth of the temple, and had ten cubits of breadth tofore the face of the temple, and for to write the curiosity and work of the temple, and the necessaries, the tables and cost that was done in gold, silver and latten, it passeth my cunning to express and English them. Ye that be clerks may see it in the Second Book of Kings and the Second Book of Paralipomenon. It is wonder to hear the costs and expenses that was made in that temple, but I pass over. It was on making seven years, and his palace was thirteen years ere it was finished. He made in the temple an altar of pure gold, and a table to set on the loaves of proposition of gold, five candlesticks of gold on the right side and five on the left side, and many other things, and took all the vessels of gold and silver that his father David had sanctified and hallowed, and brought them into the treasury of the house of our Lord. After this he assembled all the noblest and greatest of birth of them of Israel, with the princes of the tribes and dukes of

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the families, for to bring the Ark of God from the city of David, Sion, into the temple. And the priests and Levites took the Ark and bare it and all the vessels of the sanctuary that were in the tabernacle. King Solomon, with all the multitude of the children that were there, went tofore the Ark and offered sheep and oxen without estimation and number.

And the priests set the Ark in the house of our Lord in the oracle of the temple, in sancta sanctorum, under the wings of cherubim. In the ark was nothing but the two tables of Moses of stone which Moses had put in. And then Solomon blessed our Lord tofore all the people, and thanked him that he had suffered him to make an house unto his name, and besought our Lord that he whosomever prayed our Lord for any petition in that temple, that he of his mercy would hear him and be merciful to him. And our Lord appeared to him when the edifice was accomplished perfectly, and said to Solomon: I have heard thy prayer and thine oration that thou hast prayed tofore me. I have sanctified and hallowed this house that thou hast edified for to put my name therein for evermore, and my eyes and heart shall be thereon always. And if thou walk before me like as thy father walked in the simplicity of heart and in equity, and wilt do all that I have commanded thee, and keep my judgments and laws, I shall set the throne of thy reign upon Israel evermore, like as I have said to thy father David, saying: There shall not be taken away a man of thy generation from the reign and seat of Israel. If ye avert and turn from me, ye and your sons, not following ne keeping my commandments and ceremonies that I have showed tofore you, but go and worship

strange gods, and honour them, I shall cast away Israel from the face of the earth that I have given to them, and the temple that I have hallowed to my name, I shall cast it away from my sight. And it shall be a fable and proverb, and thy house an example shall be to all people; every man that shall go thereby shall be abashed and astonied, and shall say: Why hath God done thus to this land and to thy house? And they shall answer: For they have forsaken their Lord God that brought them out of the land of Egypt, and have followed strange gods, and them adored and worshipped, and therefore God hath brought on them all this evil: here may every man take ensample how perilous and dreadful it is to break the commandment of God. **The History of Solomon**

Twenty year after that Solomon had edified the temple of God and his house, and finished it perfectly, Hiram the king of Tyre went for to see towns that Solomon had given to him, and they pleased him not. Hiram had sent to king Solomon an hundred and twenty besants of gold, which he had spent on the temple and his house, and on the wall of Jerusalem and other towns and places that he had made. Solomon was rich and glorious that the fame ran, of his sapience and wisdom and of his building and dispence in his house, through the world, in so much that the queen of Sheba came from far countries to see him and to tempt him in demands and questions. And she came into Jerusalem with much people and riches, with camels charged with aromatics and gold infinite. And she came and spake to king Solomon all that ever she had in her heart. And Solomon taught her in all that ever she purposed tofore him. She could say nothing but that

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the king answered to her, there was nothing hid from him. The queen of Sheba then seeing all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had builded, and the meat and service of his table, the habitacles of his servants, the order of the ministers, their clothing and array, his butlers and officers, and the sacrifices that he offered in the house of our Lord, when she saw all these things, she had no spirit to answer, but she said to king Solomon: The word is true that I heard in my land, of thy words and thy wisdom, and I believed not them that told it to me, unto the time that I myself came and have seen it with mine eyes, and I have now well seen and proved that the half was not told to me. Thy sapience is more, and thy works also, than the tidings that I heard. Blessed be thy servants, and blessed be these that stand always tofore thee and hear thy sapience and wisdom, and thy Lord God be blessed whom thou hast pleased, and hath set thee upon the throne of Israel, for so much as God of Israel loveth thee and hath ordained thee a king for to do righteousness and justice. She gave then to the king an hundred and twenty besants of gold, many aromatics, and gems precious. There were never seen tofore so many aromatics ne so sweet odours smelling as the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that ever she desired and demanded of him, and after returned into her country and land. The weight of pure gold that was offered every year to Solomon was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, except that that the merchants offered, and all they that sold, and all the kings of Arabia and dukes of that land. Solomon made two hundred shields of the purest gold and set them in the house

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of Lebanon; he made him also a throne of ivory which was great and was clad with gold, which had six grees or steps, which was richly wrought with two lions of gold holding the seat above, and twelve small lions standing upon the steps, on every each twain, here and there. There was never such a work in no realm. And all the vessels that king Solomon drank of were of gold, and the ceiling of the house of Lebanon in which his shields of gold were in was of the most pure gold. Silver was of no price in the days of king Solomon, for the navy of the king, with the navy of Hiram went in three years once into Tarsis and brought them thence gold and silver, teeth of elephants and great riches. The king Solomon was magnified above all the kings of the world in riches and wisdom, and all the world desired to see the cheer and visage of Solomon, and to hear his wisdom that God had given to him. Every man brought to him gifts, vessels of gold and silver, clothes and armour for war, aromatics, horses and mules every year. Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen; he had a thousand four hundred chariots and cars, and twelve thousand horsemen, and were lodged in small cities and towns about Jerusalem by the king. There was as great abundance and plenty of gold and silver in those days in Jerusalem as stones or sycamores that grow in the field, and horses were brought to him from Egypt and Chao. What shall I all day write of the riches, glory and magnificence of king Solomon? It was so great that it cannot be expressed, for there was never none like to him, ne never shall none come after him like unto him. He made the book of the parables containing thirty-one chapters, the book of the Canticles, the book of Ecclesiastes,

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containing twelve chapters, and the book of Sapience containing nineteen chapters. This king Solomon loved overmuch women, and specially strange women of other sects; as king Pharaoh's daughters and many other of the gentiles, of whom God had commanded to the children of Israel that they should not have to do with them, ne they with their daughters, for God said certainly they should turn your hearts to serve their gods. To such women Solomon was coupled with most burning love. He had seven hundred wives which were as queens, and three hundred concubines, and these women turned his heart. For when he was old he so doted and loved them that they made him honour their strange gods, and worshipped Ashtareth, Chemosh and Moloch, idols of Zidonia, of Moabites, and Ammonites, and made to them Tabernacles for to please his wives and concubines, wherefore God was wroth with him, and said to him: Because thou hast not observed my precepts and my commandments that I commanded thee, I shall cut thy kingdom and divide it and give it to thy servant but not in thy day, I shall not do it for love that I had to David thy father; but from the hand of thy son I shall cut it but not all, I shall reserve to him one tribe for David's love, and Jerusalem that I have chosen. And after this divers kings became adversaries to Solomon, and was never in peace after.

It is said, but I find it not in the Bible, that Solomon repented him much of this sin of idolatry and did much penance therefor, for he let him be drawn through Jerusalem and beat himself with rods and scourges, that the blood flowed in the sight of all the people. He reigned upon all Israel

in Jerusalem forty years, and died and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Roboam his son reigned after him. The History of Rehoboam

The History of Rehoboam.

After Solomon, reigned his son Rehoboam. He came to Sichem and thither came all the people for to ordain him king. Jeroboam and all the multitude of Israel spake to Rehoboam, and said: Thy father set on us an hard yoke and great impositions, now thou hast not so much need, therefore less it and minish it, and ease us of the great and hard burden and we shall serve thee. Rehoboam answered and said: Go ye and come again the third day and ye shall have an answer. When the people was departed, Rehoboam made a counsel of the seniors and old men that had assisted his father Solomon whiles he lived, and said to them: What say ye? and counsel me that I may answer to the people, which said to Rehoboam: If thou wilt obey and agree to this people, and agree to their petition, and speak fair and friendly to them, they shall serve thee always. But Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men, and called the young men that were of his age, and asked of them counsel. And the young men that had been nourished with him bade him say to the people in this wise: Is not my finger greater than the back of my father? If my father hath laid on you a heavy burden, I shall add and put more to your burden; my father beat you with scourges, and I shall beat you with scorpions. The third day after, Jeroboam and all the people came to Reho-

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boam to have their answer, and Rehoboam left the counsel of the old men, and said to them like as the young men had counselled him. And anon the people of Israel forsook Rehoboam, and of twelve tribes, there abode with him no more but the tribe of Judah and Benjamin. And the other ten tribes departed and made Jeroboam their king, and never returned unto the house of David after unto this day. And thus for sin of Solomon, and because Rehoboam would not do after the counsel of the old men, but was counselled by young men, the ten tribes of Israel forsook him, and departed from Jerusalem, and served Jeroboam, and ordained him king upon Israel. Anon after this, Jeroboam fell to idolatry and great division was ever after between the kings of Judah and the kings of Israel. And so reigned divers kings each after other in Jerusalem after Rehoboam, and in Israel after Jeroboam. And here I leave all the history and make an end of the book of Kings for this time etc. For ye that list to know how every king reigned after other, ye may find it in the first chapter of Saint Matthew which is read on Christmas day in the morning tofore Te Deum, which is the genealogy of our Lady.

Here followeth the History of Job, read on the first Sunday of September.

There was a man in the land of Uz named Job, and this man was simple, rightful and dreading God, and going from all evil. He had seven sons and three daughters, and his possession was seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred asses, and

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his family and household passing much and great. He was a great man and rich among all the men of the orient. And his sons went daily each to other house making great feasts, ever each one as his day came, and they sent for their three sisters for to eat and drink with them. When they had thus feasted each other, Job sent to them and blessed and sanctified them, and rising every day early, he offered sacrifices for them all, saying: Lest my children sin and bless not God in their hearts. And thus did Job every day.

On a day when the sons of God were tofore our Lord, Satan came and was among them, to whom our Lord said: Whence comest thou? Which answered, I have gone round about the earth and through walked it. Our Lord said to him: Hast thou not considered my servant Job, that there is none like unto him in the earth, a man simple, rightful, dreading God, and going from evil? To whom Satan answered: Doth Job dread God idly? If so were that thou overthrewest him, his house and all his substance round about, he should soon forsake thee. Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possession is increased much in the earth, but stretch out thy hand a little, and touch all that he hath in possession, and he shall soon grudge and not bless thee. Then said our Lord to Satan: Lo! all that which he owneth and hath in possession, I will it be in thy hand and power, but on his person ne body set not thy hand. Satan departed and went from the face of our Lord. On a day as his sons and daughters ate, and drank wine, in the house of the oldest brother, there came a messenger to Job which said: The oxen eared in the plough and the ass pastured in

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the pasture by them, and the men of Sabea ran on them, and smote thy servants, and slew them with sword, and I only escaped for to come and to show it to thee. And whiles he spake came another and said: The fire of God fell down from heaven and hath burnt thy sheep and servants and consumed them, and I only escaped for to come and show it to thee. And yet whiles he spake came another and said: The Chaldees made three hosts and have enveigled thy camels and taken them, and have slain thy servants with sword, and I only escaped for to bring thee word. And yet he speaking another entered in and said: Thy sons and daughters, drinking wine in the house of thy first begotten son, suddenly came a vehement wind from the region of desert and smote the four corners of the house, which falling oppressed thy children, and they be all dead, and I only fled for to tell it to thee. Then Job arose, and cut his coat, and did do shave his head, and falling down to the ground, worshipped and adored God, saying: I am come out naked from the womb of my mother and naked shall return again thereto. Our Lord hath given and our Lord hath taken away, as it hath pleased our Lord, so it is done, the name of our Lord be blessed. In all these things Job sinned not with his lips, ne spake nothing follily against our Lord, but took it all patiently.

After this it was so that on a certain day when the children of God stood tofore our Lord, Satan came and stood among them, and God said to him: Whence comest thou? To whom Satan answered: I have gone round the earth, and walked through it. And God said to Satan, Hast thou not considered my servant Job that

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there is no man like him in the earth, a man simple, rightful, dreading God, and going from evil, and yet retaining his innocency? Thou hast moved me against him that I should put him to affliction without cause. To whom Satan said: Skin for skin, and all that ever a man hath he shall give for his soul. Nevertheless, stretch thine hand and touch his mouth and his flesh, and thou shalt see that he shall not bless thee. Then said God to Satan: I will well that his body be in thine hand, but save his soul and his life. Then Satan departed from the face of our Lord and smote Job with the worst blotches and blains from the plant of his foot unto the top of his head, which was made like a lazar and was cast out and sat on the dunghill. Then came his wife to him and said: Yet thou abidest in thy simpleness, forsake thy God and bless him no more, and go die. Then Job said to her: Thou hast spoken like a foolish woman; if we have received and taken good things of the hand of our Lord, why shall we not sustain and suffer evil things? In all these things Job sinned not with his lips. Then three men that were friends of Job, hearing what harm was happed and come to Job, came ever each one from his place to him, that one was named Eliphas the Temanite, another Bildad the Shuhite, and the third, Zophar Naamathite. And when they saw him from far they knew him not, and crying they wept. They came for to comfort him, and when they considered his misery they tare their clothes and cast dust on their heads, and sat by him seven days and seven nights, and no man spake to him a word, seeing his sorrow. Then after that Job and they talked and spake together of his sorrow and misery, of which S. Gregory hath made a

great book called: The morals of S. Gregory, which is a noble book and a great work.

The History of Job

But I pass over all the matters and return unto the end, how God restored Job again to prosperity. It was so that when these three friends of Job had been long with Job, and had said many things each of them to Job, and Job again to them, our Lord was wroth with these three men and said to them: Ye have not spoken rightfully, as my servant Job hath spoken. Take ye therefore seven bulls and seven wethers and go to my servant Job and offer ye sacrifice for you. Job my servant shall pray for you. I shall receive his prayer and shall take his visage. They went forth and did as our Lord commanded them. And our Lord beheld the visage of Job, and saw his penance when he prayed for his friends. And our Lord added to Job double of all that Job had possessed. All his brethren came to him, and all his sisters, and all they that tofore had known him, and ate with him in his house, and moved their heads upon him, and comforted him upon all the evil that God had sent to him. And each of them gave him a sheep and a gold ring for his ears. Our Lord blessed more Job in his last days than he did in the beginning. And he had then after fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, one thousand asses. And he had seven sons and three daughters. And the first daughter's name was Jemima, the second Kezia, and the third Keren-happuch. There was nowhere found in the world so fair women as were the daughters of Job. Their father Job gave to them heritage among their brethren, and thus Job by his patience gat so much love of God, that he was restored double of all his losses. And Job lived after, one

hundred and forty years, and saw his sons and sons of his sons unto the fourth generation, and died an old man, and full of days.

The History of Tobit

Here followeth the history of Tobit which is read the third Sunday of September.

Tobit of the tribe and of the city of Nephthali, which is in the overparts of Galilee upon Aser, after the way that leadeth men westward, having on his left side the city of Sepheth, was taken in the days of Salmanazar, King of the Assyrians, and put in captivity, yet he forsook not the way of truth, but all that he had or could get he departed daily with his brethren of his kindred which were prisoners with him. And how be it that he was youngest in all the tribe of Nephthali yet did he nothing childishly. Also when all other went unto the golden calves that Jeroboam, King of Israel had made, this Tobit only fled the fellowship of them all, and went to Jerusalem into the temple of our Lord. And there he adored and worshipped the Lord God of Israel, offering truly his first fruits and tithes in so much that in the third year he ministered unto proselytes and strangers all the tithe. Such things and other like to these he observed whilst he was a child, and when he came to age and was a man he took a wife named Anna, of his tribe, and begat on her a son, naming after his own name Tobias, whom from his childhood he taught to dread God and abstain him from all sin. Then after when he was brought by captivity with his wife and his son into the city of Nineveh with all his tribe, and when all ate of the meats of the Gentiles and

The History of Tobit

Paynims, this Tobit kept his soul clean and was never defouled in the meats of them. And because he remembered our Lord in all his heart, God gave him grace to be in the favour of Salmanazar the king which gave to him power to go where he would. Having liberty to do what he would, he went then to all them in captivity and gave to them warnings of health. When he came on a time in Rages, city of the Jews, he had such gifts as he had been honoured with of the king, ten besants of silver. And when he saw one Gabael being needy which was of his tribe, he lent him the said weight of silver upon his obligation. Long time after this when Salmanazar the king was dead, Sennacherib his son reigned for him, and hated, and loved not, the children of Israel. And Tobit went unto all his kindred and comforted them, and divided to every each of them as he might of his faculties and goods.

He fed the hungry and gave to the naked clothes, and diligently he buried the dead men and them that were slain. After this when Sennacherib returned, fleeing the plague from the Jewry, that God had sent him for his blasphemy, and he, being wroth, slew many of the children of Israel, and Tobit always buried the bodies of them, which was told to the king, which commanded to slay him, and took away all his substance. Tobit then with his wife and his son hid him and fled away all naked, for many loved him well. After this, forty-five days, the sons of the king slew the king, and then returned Tobit unto his house, and all his faculties and goods were restored to him again. After this on a high festival day of our Lord when that Tobit had a good dinner in his house, he said to his son: Go

and fetch to us some of our tribe dreading God, that they may come and eat with us. And he went forth and anon he returned telling to his father that one of the children of Israel was slain and lay dead in the street. And anon he leapt out of his house, leaving his meat, and fasting came to the body, took it and bare it in to his house privily, that he might secretly bury it when the sun went down. And when he had hid the corpse, he ate his meat with wailing and dread, remembering that word that our Lord said by Amos the prophet: The day of your feast shall be turned into lamentation and wailing. And when the sun was gone down he went and buried him. All his neighbours reproved and chid him, saying for this cause they were commanded to be slain, and unnethe thou escapedst the commandment of death, and yet thou buriest dead men. But Tobit, more dreading God than the king, took up the bodies of dead men and hid them in his house, and at midnight he buried them. It happed on a day after this that when he was weary of burying dead men, he came home and laid him down by a wall and slept. And from a swallow's nest above there fell down hot dung of them on his eyes, and he was thereof blind. This temptation suffered God to fall to him, that it should be an example to them that shall come after him of his patience, like as it was of holy Job. For from his infancy he dreaded ever God and kept his precepts and was not grudging against God for his blindness, but he abode immovable in the dread of God, giving and rendering thankings to God all the days of his life. For like as Job was assailed so was Tobit assailed of his kinsmen, scorning him and saying to him: Where is now thy hope and reward for which

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thou gavest thy alms and madest sepulchres? Tobit blamed them for such words, saying to them: In no wise say ye not so, for we be the sons of holy men, and we abide that life that God shall give to them that never shall change their faith from him. Anna his wife went daily to the work of weaving, and got by the labour of her hands their livelihood as much as she might. Whereof on a day she gat a kid and brought it home. When Tobit heard the voice of the kid bleating, he said: See that it be not stolen, yield it again to the owner, for it is not lawful for us to eat ne touch anything that is stolen. To that his wife all angry answered: Now manifestly and openly is thine hope made vain, and thy alms lost. And thus with such and like words she chid him. Then Tobit began to sigh and began to pray our Lord with tears saying: O Lord, thou art rightful, and all thy dooms be true, and all thy ways be mercy, truth, and righteousness. And now, Lord, remember me, and take now no vengeance of my sins, ne remember not my trespasses, ne the sins of my fathers. For we have not obeyed thy commandments, therefore we be betaken in to direption, captivity, death, fables, and into reproof and shame to all nations in which thou hast dispersed us. And now, Lord, great be thy judgments, for we have not done according to thy precepts, ne have not walked well tofore thee. And now, Lord, do to me after thy will, and command my spirit to be received in peace, it is more expedient to me to die than to live.

The same day it happed that Sara, daughter of Raguel in the city of Medes, that she was rebuked and heard reproof of one of the handmaidens of her father. For she had been given to seven men, and a devil named Asmodeus slew them as soon as

they would have gone to her; therefore the maid reproved her saying: We shall never see son ne daughter of thee on the earth, thou slayer of thy husbands. Wilt thou slay me as thou hast slain seven men? With this voice and rebuke she went up in the upperest cubicle of the house. And three days and three nights she ate not, ne drank not, but was continually in prayers beseeching God for to deliver her from this reproof and shame. And on the third day, when she had accomplished her prayer, blessing our Lord she said: Blessed be thy name, God of our fathers, for when thou art wroth thou shalt do mercy and in a time of tribulation thou forgivest sins to them that call to thee. Unto thee, Lord, I convert my visage, and unto thee I address mine eyes. I ask and require thee that thou assoil me from the bond of the reproof and shame, or certainly upon the earth keep me. Thou knowest well, Lord, that I never desired man, but I have kept clean my soul from all concupiscence. I never meddled me with players, ne never had part of them that walk in lightness. I consented for to take an husband with thy dread, but I never gave consent to take one with my lust. Or I was unworthy to them or haply they were unworthy to me, or haply thou hast conserved and kept me for some other man. Thy counsel is not in man's power. This knoweth every man that worshippeth thee, for the life of him if it be in probation shall be crowned, and if it be in tribulation it shall be delivered, and if it be in correction, it shall be lawful to come to mercy. Thou hast none delectation in our perdition, for after tempest thou makest tranquillity, and after weeping and shedding of tears thou bringest in exultation and joy. Thy name, God of Israel be blessed, world without end.

The History of Tobit

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In that same time were the prayers of them both heard in the sight of the glory of the high God. And the holy angel of God, Raphael, was sent to heal them both. Of whom in one time were the prayers recited in the sight of our Lord God. Then when Tobit supposed his prayers to be heard that he might die, he called to him his son Tobias, and said to him: Hear, my son, the words of my mouth, and set them in thy heart as a fundament. When God shall take away my soul, bury my body, and thou shalt worship thy mother all the days of her life, thou owest to remember what and how many perils she hath suffered for thee in her womb. When she shall have accomplished the time of her life, bury her by me. All the days of thy life have God in thy mind, and beware that thou never consent to sin, ne to disobey ne break the commandments of God. Of thy substance do alms, and turn never thy face from any poor man, so do that God turn not his face from thee. As much as thou mayest, be merciful, if thou have much good give abundantly, if thou have but little, yet study to give and to depart thereof gladly, for thou makest to thee thereof good treasure and meed in the day of necessity, for alms deliver eth a man from all sin and from death, and suffereth not his soul to go in to darkness. Alms is a great sikerness tofore the high God unto all them that do it. Beware, my son, keep thee from all fornication, and suffer not thyself save with thy wife to know that sin; and suffer never pride to have domination in thy wit, ne in thy word, that sin was the beginning of all perdition. Whosomever work to thee any thing, anon yield to him his meed and hire, let never the hire of thy servant ne meed of thy mercenary

remain in no wise with thee. That thou hatest to be done to thee of other, see that thou never do to an other. Eat thy bread with the hungry and needy, and cover the naked with thy clothes. Ordain thy bread and wine upon the sepulture of a righteous man, but eat it not ne drink it with sinners. Ask and demand counsel of a wise man. Always and in every time bless God and desire of him that he address thy ways, and let all thy counsels abide in him. I tell to thee, my son, that when thou wert a little child I lent to Gabael ten besants of silver, dwelling in Rages the city of Medes, upon an obligation, which I have by me. And therefore spere and ask how thou mayst go to him, and thou shalt receive of him the said weight of silver and restore to him his obligation. Dread thou not, my son; though we lead a poor life, we shall have much good if we dread God and go from sin and do well. Then young Tobias answered to his father: All that thou hast commanded me I shall do, father; but how I shall get this money I wot never; he knoweth not me, ne I know not him; what token shall I give him? And also I know not the way thither. Then his father answered to him and said: I have his obligation by me, which when thou shewest him, anon he shall pay thee. But go now first and seek for thee some true man, that for his hire shall go with thee whiles I live, that thou mayest receive it.

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Then Tobias went forth and found a fair young man girt up and ready for to walk, and not knowing that it was the angel of God, saluted him and said: From whence have we thee, good young man? And he answered: Of the children of Israel. And Tobias said to him. Knowest

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thou the way that leadeth one into the region of Medes? To whom he answered: I know it well, and all the journeys I have oft walked and have dwelled with Gabael our brother which dwelled in Rages the city of Medes, which standeth in the hill of Ecbathanis. To whom Tobias said: I pray thee tary here a while till I have told this to my father. Then Tobias went in to his father and told to him all these things, whereon his father marvelled and prayed him that he should bring him in. Then the angel came in and saluted the old Tobit and said: Joy be to thee always. And Tobit said: What joy shall be to me that sit in darkness, and see not the light of heaven. To whom the youngling said: Be of strong belief; it shall not be long but of God thou shalt be cured and healed. Then said Tobit to him: Mayest thou lead my son unto Gabael in Rages city of Medes, and when thou comest again I shall restore to thee thy meed. And the angel said: I shall lead him thither and bring him again to thee. To whom Tobit said: I pray thee to tell me of what house or of what kindred art thou. To whom Raphael the angel said: Thou needest not to ask the kindred of him that shall go with thy son, but lest haply I should not deliver him to thee again: I am Azarias son of great Ananias. Tobit answered: Thou art of a great kindred, but I pray thee be not wroth, though I would know thy kindred. The angel said to him: I shall safely lead thy son thither, and safely bring him and render him to thee again. Tobit then answered saying: Well mote ye walk, and our Lord be in your journey, and his angel fellowship with you. Then, when all was ready that they should have with them by the way, young Tobias

took leave of his father and mother, and bade them farewell. When they should depart the mother began to weep and say: Thou hast taken away and sent from us the staff of our old age, would God that thilke money had never been for which thou hast sent him, our poverty sufficeth enough to us that we might have seen our son Tobit said to her: Weep not, our son shall come safely again and thine eyes shall see him. I believe that the good angel of God hath fellowship with him, and shall dispose all things that shall be needful to him, and that he shall return again to us with joy. With this the mother ceased of her weeping and was still. The History of Tobit

Then young Tobias went forth and an hound followed him. And the first mansion that they made was by the river of Tigris, and Tobias went out for to wash his feet, and there came a great fish for to devour him, whom Tobias fearing cried out with a great voice: Lord, he cometh on me, and the angel said to him: Take him by the fin and draw him to thee. And so he did and drew him out of the water to the dry land. Then said the angel to him: Open the fish and take to thee the heart, the gall, and the milt, and keep them by thee; they be profitable and necessary for medicines. And when he had done so he roasted of the fish, and took it with them for to eat by the way, and the remnant they salted, that it might suffice them till they came into the city of Rages. Then Tobias demanded of the angel and said: I pray thee, Azarias, brother, to tell me whereto these be good that thou hast bidden me keep. And the angel answered and said: If thou take a little of his heart and put it on the coals, the smoke and fume thereof driveth away all

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manner kind of devils, be it from man or from woman, in such wise that he shall no more come to them. And Tobias said: Where wilt thou that we shall abide? And he answered and said: Hereby is a man named Raguel, a man nigh to thy kindred and tribe, and he hath a daughter named Sara, he hath neither son ne daughter more than her. Thou shalt owe all his substance, for thee behoveth to take her to thy wife. Then Toby answered and said: I have heard say that she hath been given to seven men, and they be dead, and I have heard that a devil slayeth them. I dread therefore that it might hap so to me, and I that am an only son to my father and mother, I should depose their old age with heaviness and sorrow to hell. Then Raphael the angel said to him: Hear me, and I shall show thee wherewith thou mayst prevail against that devil; these that took their wedlock in such wise that they exclude God from them and their mind, and wait but to their lust as a horse and mule in whom is none understanding, the devil hath power upon them. Thou therefore when thou shalt take a wife, and enterest into her cubicle, be thou continent by the space of three days from her, and thou shalt do nothing but be in prayers with her: and that same night put the heart of the fish on the fire, and that shall put away the devil. The second night thou shalt be admitted in copulation of holy patriarchs. The third night ye shall follow the blessing that sons may be begotten of you both, and after the third night thou shalt take the virgin with dread of God, more for love of procreation of children than for lust of thy body, that thou mayst follow the blessing of Abraham in his seed. Then they went and entered into

Raguel's house, and Raguel received them joyously, and Raguel, heholding well Tobias, said to Anna his wife: How like is this young man unto my cousin! And when he had so said he asked them: Whence be ye, young men my brethren? And they said: Of the tribe of Nephthalim, of the captivity of Nineveh. Raguel said to them: Know ye Tobit my brother? Which said: We know him well. When Raguel had spoken much good of him, the angel said to Raguel: Tobit of whom thou demandest is father of this young man. And then went Raguel, and with weeping eyes kissed him, and weeping upon his neck said: The blessing of God be to thee, my son, for thou art son of a blessed and good man. And Anna his wife and Sara his daughter wept also. The History of Tobit

After they had spoken, Raguel commanded to slay a wether, and make ready a feast. When he then should bid them sit down to dinner, Tobias said: I shall not eat here this day ne drink but if thou first grant to me my petition, and promise to me to give me Sara thy daughter. Which when Raguel heard he was astonied and abashed, knowing what had fallen to seven men that tofore had wedded her, and dreaded lest it might happen to this young man in like wise. And when he held his peace and would give him none answer the angel said to him: Be not afeard to give thy daughter to this man dreading God, for to him thy daughter is ordained to be his wife, therefore none other may have her. Then said Raguel: I doubt not God hath admitted my prayers and tears in his sight, and I believe that therefore he hath made you to come to me that these may be joined in one kindred after the law of Moses, and now have no doubt but I shall give her to thee. And he taking

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the right hand of his daughter delivered it to Tobias saying: God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob be with you, and he conjoin you together and fulfil his blessing in you. And took a charter and wrote the conscription of the wedlock. And after this they ate, blessing our Lord God. Raguel called to him Anna his wife and bade her to make ready another cubicle. And she brought Sara her daughter therein, and she wept, to whom her mother said: Be thou strong of heart, my daughter, our Lord of heaven give to thee joy for the heaviness that thou hast suffered. After they had supped, they led the young man to her. Tobias remembered the words of the angel, and took out of his bag part of the heart of the fish, and laid it on burning coals. Then Raphael the angel took the devil and bound him in the upperest desert of Egypt. Then Tobias exhorted the virgin and said to her: Arise, Sara, and let us pray to God this day, and to-morrow, and after to-morrow, for these three nights we be joined to God. And after the third night we shall be in our wedlock. We be soothly the children of saints, and we may not so join together as people do that know not God. Then they both arising prayed together instantly that health might be given to them. Tobias said: Lord God of our fathers, heaven and earth, sea, wells, and floods, and all creatures that be in them, bless thee. Thou madest Adam of the slime of the earth, and gavest to him for an help Eve, and now, Lord, thou knowest that for the cause of lechery I take not my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity and procreation of children, in which thy name be blessed world without end. Then said Sara: Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy, and let us

wax old both together in health. And after this the cocks began to crow, at which time Raguel commanded his servants to come to him, and they together went for to make and delve a sepulchre. He said: Lest haply it happen to him as it hath happed to the seven men that wedded her. When they had made ready the foss and pit, Raguel returned to his wife and said to her: Send one of thine handmaidens, and let her see if he be dead, that he may be buried ere it be light day. And she sent forth one of her servants, which entered into the cubicle and found them both safe and whole, and sleeping together, and she returned and brought good tidings. And Raguel and Anna blessed our Lord God and said: We bless thee, Lord God of Israel, that it hath not happed to us as we supposed; thou hast done to us thy mercy, and thou hast excluded from us our enemy pursuing us, thou hast done mercy on two only children. Make them, Lord, to bless thee to full, and to offer to thee sacrifice of praising and of their health, that the university of peoples may know that thou art God only in the universal earth. Anon then Raguel commanded his servants to fill again the pit that they had made ere it waxed light, and bade his wife to ordain a feast, and make all ready that were necessary to meat. He did do slay two fat kine and four wethers, and to ordain meat for all his neighbours and friends, and Raguel desired and adjured Tobias that he should abide with him two weeks. Of all that ever Raguel had in possession of goods he gave half part to Tobias, and made to him a writing that the other half part he should have after the death of him and his wife. Then Tobias called the angel to him, which he trowed had been a man, and said to him: Azarias,

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brother, I pray thee to take heed to my words; if I make myself servant to thee I shall not be worthy to satisfy thy providence. Nevertheless I pray thee to take to thee the beasts and servants and go to Gabael in Rages the city of Medes, and render to him his obligation, and receive of them the money and pray him to come to my wedding. Thou knowest thyself that my father numbereth the days of my being out, and if I tarry more his soul shall be heavy, and certainly thou seest how Raguel hath adjured me, whose desire I may not despise. Then Raphael, taking four of the servants of Raguel and two camels, went to Rages the city of Medes, and there finding Gabael, gave to him his obligation and received all the money, and told to him of Tobias, son of Tobit, all that was done, and made him come with him to the wedding. When then he entered the house of Raguel, he found Tobias sitting at meat, and came to him and kissed him, and Gabael wept and blessed God saying: God of Israel bless thee, for thou art son of the best man and just, dreading God and doing alms, and the blessing be said upon thy wife and your parents, and that you may see the sons of your sons unto the third and fourth generation, and your seed be blessed of the God of Israel, which reigneth in secula seculorum. And when all had said Amen, they went to the feast. And with the dread of God they exercised the feast of their weddings. Whiles that Tobias tarried because of his marriage, his father Tobit began to be heavy saying: Trowest thou wherefore my son tarrieth and why he is holden there? Trowest thou that Gabael be dead, and no man is there that shall give him his money?

He began to be sorry and heavy greatly, both

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he and Anna his wife with him, and began both to weep because at the day set he came not home. His mother therefore wept with unmeasurable tears, and said: Alas, my son, wherefore sent we thee to go this pilgrimage? The light of our eyes, the staff of our age, the solace of our life, the hope of our posterity, all these only having in thee, we ought not to have let thee go from us. To whom Tobit said: Be still and trouble thee not, our son is safe enough, the man is true and faithful enough with whom we sent him. She might in no wise be comforted, but every day she went and looked and espied the way that he should come if she might see him come from far. Then Raguel said to Tobias his son-in-law: Abide here with me, and I shall send messengers of thy health and welfare to Tobit thy father. To whom Tobias said: I know well that my father and my mother accompt the days, and the spirit is in great pain within them. Raguel prayed him with many words, but Tobias would in no wise grant him. Then he delivered to him Sara his daughter, and half part of all his substance in servants, men and women, in beasts, camels, in kine and much money. And safe and joyful he let him depart from him, saying: The angel of God that is holy be in your journey, and bring you home whole and sound, and that ye may find all things well and rightful about your father and mother, and that mine eyes may see your sons ere I die. And the father and mother taking their daughter kissed her and let her depart, warning her to worship her husband's father and mother, love her husband, to rule well the meiny, to govern the house and to keep herself irreprehensible, that is to say, without reproof.

When they thus returned and departed, they

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came to Charram, which is the half way to Nineveh, the thirteenth day. Then said the angel to Tobias: Tobias, brother, thou knowest how thou hast left thy father, if it please thee we will go tofore and let thy family come softly after, with thy wife and with thy beasts. This pleased well to Tobias; and then said Raphael to Tobias: Take with thee of the gall of the fish, it shall be necessary. Tobias took of the gall and went forth tofore. Anna his mother sat every day by the way in the top of the hill, from whence she might see him come from far, and whilst she sat there and looked after his coming, she saw afar and knew her son coming, and running home she told to her husband saying: Lo! thy son cometh. Raphael then said to young Tobias: Anon as thou enterest in to the house adore thy Lord God, and giving to him thankings, go to thy father and kiss him. And anon then anoint his eyes with the gall of the fish that thou bearest with thee, thou shalt well know that his eyes shall be opened, and thy father shall see the light of heaven and shall joy in thy sight. Then ran the dog that followed him and had been with him in the way, and came home as a messenger, fawning and making joy with his tail. And the blind father arose and began offending his feet to run to meet his son, giving to him his hand, and so taking, kissed him with his wife, and began to weep for joy. When then they had worshipped God and thanked him, they sat down together. Then Tobias taking the gall of the fish anointed his father's eyes, and abode as it had been half an hour, and the slime of his eyes began to fall away like as it had been the white of an egg, which Tobias took and drew from his father's eyes, and anon he

received sight. And they glorified God, that is to wit he and his wife and all they that knew him. The History of Tobit

Then said Tobit the father: I bless thee, Lord God of Israel, for thou hast chastised me, and thou hast saved me, and, lo! I see Tobias my son. After these seven days Sara the wife of his son came and entered in with all the family, and the beasts whole and sound, camels and much money of his wife's, and also the money that he had received of Gabael. And he told to his father and mother all the benefits of God that was done to him by the man that led him. Then came Achiacharus and Nasbas, cousins of Tobias, joying and thanking God of all the goods that God had showed to him. And seven days they ate together making feast, and were glad with great joy. Then old Tobit call his son Tobias to him, and said: What may we give to this holy man that cometh with thee? Then Tobias answering said to his father: Father, what meed may we give to him, or what may be worthy to him for his benefits? He led me out and hath brought me whole again, he received the money of Gabael; he did me have my wife and he put away the devil from her; he hath made joy to my parents, and saved myself from devouring of the fish, and hath made thee see the light of heaven, and by him we be replenished with all goods; what may we then worthily give to him? Wherefore I pray thee, father, that thou pray him if he vouchsafe to take the half of all that I have. Then the father and the son calling him took him apart and began to pray him that he would vouchsafe to take half the part of all the goods that they had brought. Then said he to them privily: Bless ye God of heaven and before all living people knowledge ye him, for

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he hath done to you his mercy. Forsooth to hide the sacrament of the king it is good, but for to show the works of God and to knowledge them it is worshipful. Oration and prayer is good, with fasting and alms, and more than to set up treasures of gold. For alms delivereth from death, and it is she that purgeth sins and maketh a man to find everlasting life. Who that do sin and wickedness they be enemies of his soul. I show to you therefore the truth and I shall not hide from you the secret word. When thou prayedst with tears and didst bury the dead men and leftest thy dinner and hiddest dead men by day in thine house, and in the night thou buriedst them, I offered thy prayer unto God. And for as much as thou wert accepted tofore God, it was necessary, thou being tempted, that he should prove thee. And now hath our Lord sent me for to cure thee, and Sara the wife of thy son I have delivered from the devil. I am soothly Raphael the angel, one of the seven which stand tofore our Lord God. When they heard this they were troubled, and trembling fell down on their faces upon the ground. The angel said to them: Peace be to you, dread you not. Forsooth I was with you by the will of God, him alway bless ye and sing ye to him, I was seen of you to eat and drink, but I use meat and drink invisible, which of men may not be seen. It is now therefore time that I return to him which sent me. Ye alway bless God and tell ye all his marvels. And when he had said this he was taken away from the sight of them, and after that they might no more see him. Then they fell down flat on their faces by the space of three hours and blessed God, and arising up they told all the marvels of him. Then the older Tobit opening

his mouth blessed our Lord and said: Great art thou, Lord, evermore, and thy reign is in to all worlds, for thou scourgest and savest, thou leadest to hell and bringest again, and there is none that may flee thy hand. Knowledge and confess you to the Lord, ye children of Israel, and in the sight of Gentiles praise ye him. Therefore he hath disperpled you among Gentiles that know him not, that ye tell his marvels, and make them to be known. For there is none other God Almighty but he; he hath chastised us for our wickedness and he shall save us for his mercy. Take heed and see therefore what he hath done to us, and with fear and dread, knowledge ye to him, and exalt him king of all worlds in your works. I soothly in the land of my captivity shall knowledge to him, for he hath showed his majesty into the sinful people. Confess ye therefore sinners, and do ye justice tofore our Lord by believing that he shall do to you his mercy, aye soothly, and my soul shall be glad in him. All ye chosen of God, bless ye him and make ye days of gladness and knowledge ye to him. Jerusalem city of God, our Lord hath chastised thee in the works of his hands, confess thou to our Lord in his good things and bless thou the God of worlds that he may re-edify in thee his tabernacle, and that he may call again to thee all prisoners and them that be in captivity and that thou joy in omnia secula seculorum. Thou shalt shine with a bright light, and all the ends of the earth shall worship thee. Nations shall come to thee from far, and bringing gifts shall worship in thee our Lord, and shall have thy land into sanctification. They shall call in thee a great name, they shall be cursed that shall despise thee, and they all shall be condemned

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that blaspheme thee. Blessed be they that edify thee, thou shalt be joyful in thy sons, for all shall be blessed, and shall be gathered together unto our Lord. Blessed be they that love thee and that joy upon thy peace. My soul, bless thou our Lord, for he hath delivered Jerusalem his city. I shall be blessed if there be left of my seed for to see the clearness of Jerusalem. The gates of Jerusalem shall be edified of sapphire and emerald, and all the circuit of his walls of precious stone; all the streets thereof shall be paved with white stone and clean; and Alleluia shall be sung by the ways thereof. Blessed be the Lord that hath exalted it that it may be his kingdom in secula seculorum, Amen. And thus Tobit finished these words. And Tobit lived after he had received his sight forty-two years, and saw the sons of his nephews, that is, the sons of the sons of his son young Tobias. And when he had lived one hundred and two years he died, and was honorably buried in the city of Nineveh.

He was fifty-six years old when he lost his sight, and when he was sixty years old he received his sight again. The residue of his life was in joy, and with good profit of the dread of God he departed in peace. In the hour of his death he called to him Tobias his son, and seven of his young sons, his nephews, and said to them: The destruction of Nineveh is nigh, the word of God shall not pass, and our brethren that be disperpled from the land of Israel shall return thither again. All the land thereof shall be fulfilled with desert, and the house that is burnt therein shall be re-edified, and thither shall return all people dreading God. And Gentiles shall leave their idols and shall come in Jerusalem and shall dwell therein, and all

the kings of the earth shall joy in her, worshipping the king of Israel. Hear ye therefore, my sons, me your father, serve ye God in truth and seek ye that ye do that may be pleasing to him, and command ye to your sons that they do righteousness and alms, that they may remember God and bless him in all time in truth and in all their virtue. Now therefore, my sons, hear me and dwell ye no longer here, but whensoever your mother shall die, bury her by me and from then forthon dress ye your steps that ye go hence, I see well that wickedness shall make an end of it. It was so then after the death of his mother, Tobias went from Nineveh with his wife and his sons, and the sons of his sons, and returned unto his wife's father and mother, whom they found in good health and good age, and took the cure and charge of them, and were with them unto their death, and closed their eyes. And Tobias received all the heritage of the house of Raguel and saw the sons of his sons unto the fifth generation. And when he had complished ninety-nine years he died in the dread of God, and with joy they buried him. All his cognation and all his generation abode in good life and in holy conversation, and in such wise as they were acceptable as well to God as to men, and to all dwelling on the earth.

The History of Judith

Here beginneth the story of Judith which is read the last Sunday of October.

Arphaxad, king of the Medes, subdued into his empire many peoples and edified a mighty city, which he named Ecbatane, and made it with stones squared, and polished them. The walls

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thereof were of height seventy cubits, and of breadth thirty cubits, and the towers thereof were an hundred cubits high. And he glorified himself as he that was mighty in puissance and in the glory of his host and of his chariots. Nebuchadnezzar then in the twelfth year of his reign, which was king of the Assyrians, and reigned in the city of Nineveh, fought against Arphaxad and took him in the field, whereof Nebuchadnezzar was exalted and enhanced himself, and sent unto all regions about and unto Jerusalem till the Mounts of Ethiopia, for to obey and hold of him. Which all gainsaid him with one will, and without worship sent home his messengers void, and set nought by him. Then Nebuchadnezzar, having them at great indignation, swore by his reign and by his throne that he would avenge him on them all, and thereupon called all his dukes, princes, and men of war, and held a counsel in which was decreed that he should subdue all the world unto his empire. And thereupon he ordained Holofernes prince of his knighthood, and bade him go forth, and in especial against them that had despised his empire; and bade him spare no realm ne town but subdue all to him. Then Holofernes assembled dukes and masters of the strength of Nebuchadnezzar, and numbered one hundred and twenty thousand footmen, and horsemen shooters twelve thousand. And tofore them he commanded to go a multitude of innumerable camels laden with such things as were needful to the host, as victual, gold and silver, much that was taken out of the treasury of the kings. And so went to many realms which he subdued; and occupied a great part of the orient till he came approaching the land of Israel. And when the children of Israel heard thereof they

dreaded sore lest he should come among them into Jerusalem and destroy the temple, for Nebuchadnezzar had commanded that he should extinct all the gods of the earth, and that no god should be named ne worshipped but he himself, of all the nations that Holofernes should subdue. The History of Judith

Eliachim, then priest in Israel, wrote unto all them in the mountains that they should keep the strait ways of the mountains, and so the children of Israel did as the priest had ordained. Then Eliachim, the priest, went about all Israel and said to them: Know ye that God hath heard your prayers, if ye abide and continue in your prayers and fastings in the sight of God. Remember ye of Moses, the servant of God, which overthrew Amalek trusting in his strength, and in his power, in his host, in his helmets, in his chariots, and in his horsemen; not fighting with iron but with praying of holy prayers. In like wise shall it be with all the enemies of Israel if ye persevere in this work that ye have begun. With this exhortation they continued praying God. They persevered in the sight of God, and also they that offered to our Lord were clad with sackcloth, and had ashes on their heads, and with all their heart they prayed God to visit his people Israel. It was told to Holofernes prince of the knighthood of the Assyrians that the children of Israel made them ready to resist him, and had closed the ways of the mountains, and he was burned in overmuch fury in great ire. He called all the princes of Moab and dukes of Ammon and said to them: Say ye to me, what people is this that besiege the mountains, or what or how many cities have they? And what is their virtue, and what multitude is of them? Or who is king of

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their knighthood? Then Achior, duke of all of them of Ammon, answering said: If thou deignest to hear me I shall tell thee truth of this people that dwelleth in the mountains, and there shall not issue out of my mouth one false word. This people dwelled first in Mesopotamia, and was of the progeny of the Chaldees, but would not dwell there for they would not follow the gods of their fathers that were in the land of Chaldees, and going and leaving the ceremonies of their fathers, which was in the multitude of many gods, they honoured one, God of heaven, which commanded them to go thence that they should dwell in Canaan. Then after was there much hunger, that they descended into Egypt, and there abode four hundred years, and multiplied that they might not be numbered. When the king of Egypt grieved them in his buildings, bearing clay tiles, and subdued them, they cried to our Lord, and he smote the land of Egypt with divers plagues. When they of Egypt had cast them out from them, the plagues ceased from them and then they would have taken them again and would have called them to their service, and they fleeing, their God opened the sea to them that they went through dry-foot, in which the innumerable host of the Egyptians pursuing them were drowned, that there was not one of them saved for to tell to them that came after them. They passed thus the Red Sea, and he fed them with manna forty years, and made bitter waters sweet, and gave them water out of a stone. And wheresoever this people entered without bow or arrow, shield or sword, their God fought for them, and there is no man may prevail against this people but when they departed from the culture and honor of their God. And as oft as

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they have departed from their God and worshipped other strange gods, so oft have they been overcome with their enemies. And when they repent and come to the knowledge of their sin, and cry their God mercy, they be restored again, and their God giveth to them virtue to resist their enemies. They have overthrown Cananeum the king, Jebusee, Pheresee, Eneum, Etheum and Amoreum, and all the mighty men in Esebon, and have taken their lands and cities and possess them, and shall, as long as they please their God. Their God hated wickedness, for tofore this time when they went from the laws that their God gave to them, he suffered them to be taken of many nations into captivity, and were disperpled. And now late they be come again and possess Jerusalem wherein is sancta sanctorum, and be come over these mountains whereas some of them dwell. Now therefore, my lord, see and search if there be any wickedness of them in the sight of their God, and then let us go to them, for their God shall give them into thy hands and they shall be subdued under the yoke of thy power.

And when Achior had said thus, all the great men about Holofernes were angry and had thought for to have slain him, saying each to other: Who is this that may make the children of Israel resist the king Nebuchadnezzar and his army and host? Men cowards and without might and without any wisdom of war. Therefore that Achior may know that he saith not true, let us ascend the mountains, and when the mighty men of them be taken let him be slain with them, that all men may know that Nebuchadnezzar is god of the earth, and that there is none other but he. Then when they ceased to speak, Holofernes having indigna-

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tion said to Achior: Because thou hast prophesied to us of the children of Israel saying, that their God defended them, I shall show to thee that there is no god but Nebuchadnezzar, for whom we have overcome them all and slain them as one man, then shalt thou die with them by the sword of the Assyrians, and all Israel shall be put into ruin and perdition, and then shall be known that Nebuchadnezzar is lord of all the earth, and the sword of my knighthood shall pass through thy sides. And thou shalt depart hence and go to them, and shalt not die unto the time that I have them and thee. And when I have slain them with my sword thou shalt in like wise be slain with like vengeance. After this Holofernes commanded his servants to take Achior, and lead him to Bethulia and to put him in the hands of them of Israel. And so they took Achior and ascended the mountains, against whom came out men of war. Then the servants of Holofernes turned aside and bound Achior to a tree hands and feet with cords, and left him and so returned to their lord. Then the sons of Israel coming down from Bethulia loosed and unbound him, and brought him to Bethulia, and he being set amid the people was demanded what he was, and why he was so sore there bounden. And he told to them all the matter like as it is aforesaid, and how Holofernes had commanded him to be delivered unto them of Israel. Then all the people fell down on to their faces worshipping God, and with great lamentation and weeping, with one will made their prayers unto our Lord God of heaven, and that he would behold the pride of them, and to the meekness of them of Israel, and take heed to the faces of his hallows and show to them his grace and not

forsake them, and prayed God to have mercy on them and defend them from their enemies. And on that other side, Holofernes commanded his hosts to go up and assail Bethulia, and so went up, of footmen one hundred and twenty thousand, and twelve thousand horsemen, and besieged the town, and took their water from them, in so much that they that were in the town were in great penury of water, for in all the town was not water enough for one day, and such as they had was given to the people by measure. Then all the people young and old came to Ozias which was their prince, with Charmis and Gothoniel, all with one voice crying: God the Lord deem between us and thee, for thou hast done to us evil what thou spakest not peaceably with the Assyrians, for now we shall be delivered into the hands of them. It is better for us to live in captivity under Holofernes and live, than to die here for thirst, and see our wives and children die before our eyes. And when they had made this piteous crying and yelling, they went all to their church, and there a long while prayed and cried unto God knowledging their sins and wickedness, meekly beseeching him to show his grace and pity on them. Then at last Ozias arose up, and said to the people: Let us abide yet five days, and if God send us no rescue ne help us not in that time that we may give glory to his name, else we shall do as ye have said. And when that Judith heard thereof, which was a widow and a blessed woman, and was left widow three years and six months.

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After that Manasses her husband died, anon she went into the overest part of her house in which she made a privy bed, which she and her

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servants closed, and having on her body a hair, had fasted all the days of her life save Sabbaths and new moons, and the feasts of the house of Israel. She was a fair woman and her husband had left her much riches, with plentiful meiny, and possessions of droves of oxen and flocks of sheep, and she was a famous woman and dreaded God greatly. And when she had heard that Ozias had said, that the fifth day the city should be given over if God helped them not, she sent for the priests Chambris and Charmis and said to them: What is this word in which Ozias hath consented that the city should be delivered to the Assyrians if within five days there come no help to us? And who be ye that tempt the Lord God? This word is not to stir God to mercy but rather to arouse wrath and woodness. Ye have set a time of mercy doing by God, and in your doom ye have ordained a day to him. O good Lord, how patient is he, let us ask him for forgiveness with weeping tears; he shall not threaten as a man, ne inflame in wrath as a son of a man, therefore meek we our souls to him and in a contrite spirit and meeked, serve we to him, and say we weeping to God, that after his will he show to us his mercy, and as our heart is troubled in the pride of them, so also of our humbleness and meekness let us be joyful. For we have not followed the sin of our fathers that forsook their God and worshipped strange gods, wherefore they were given and be taken into hideous and great vengeance, into sword, ravin, and into confusion to their enemies; we forsooth know no other god but him. Abide we meekly the comfort of him, and he shall keep us from our enemies, and he shall make all gentiles that arise against him, and shall make them without worship the

Lord our God. And now ye brethren, ye that be priests, on whom hangeth the life of the people of God, pray ye unto Almighty God that he make me steadfast in the purpose that I have proposed. Ye shall stand at the gate and I shall go out with my handmaid. And pray ye the Lord that he steadfast make my soul, and do ye nothing till I come again. The History of Judith

And then Judith went into her oratory, and arrayed her with her precious clothing and adornments, and took unto her handmaid certain victuals such as she might lawfully eat, and when she had made her prayers unto God she departed in her most noble array toward the gate, whereas Ozias and the priests abode her, and when they saw her they marvelled of her beauty. Notwithstanding they let her go, saying: God of our fathers give thee grace and strengthen all the counsel of thine heart with his virtue and glory to Jerusalem, and be thy name in the number of saints and of righteous men. And they all that were there said: Amen and, fiat! fiat! Then she praising God passed through the gate, and her handmaid with her. And when she came down the hill, about the springing of the day, anon the spies of the Assyrians took her saying: Whence comest thou, or whither goest thou? The which answered: I am a daughter of the Hebrews and flee from them, knowing that they shall be taken by you, and come to Holofernes for to tell him their privities, and I shall show him by what entry he may win them, in such wise as one man of his host shall not perish. And the men that heard these words beheld her visage and wondered of her beauty, saying to her: Thou hast saved thy life because thou hast founden such counsel, come therefore to our Lord, for

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when thou shalt stand in his sight he shall accept thee. And they led her to the tabernacle of Holofernes. And when she came before him anon Holofernes was caught by his eyes, and his tyrant knights said to him: Who despised the people of Jews that have so fair women, that not for them of right we ought to fight against them? And so Judith seeing Holofernes sitting in his canape that was of purple, of gold, smaragdos and precious stones within woven, and when she had seen his face she honored him, falling down herself unto the earth. And the servants of Holofernes took her up, he so commanding. Then Holofernes said to her: Be thou not afeard ne dread thee not. I never grieved ne noyed man that would serve Nebuchadnezzar. Thy people soothly, if they had not despised me, I had not raised my people ne strength against them. Now tell to me the cause why thou wentest from them, and that it hath pleased thee to come to us. And Judith said: Take the words of thine handmaid, and if thou follow them, a perfect thing God shall do with thee. Forsooth Nebuchadnezzar is the living king of the earth, and thou hast his power for to chastise all people, for men only serve not him, but also the beasts of the field obey to him, his might is known over all. And the children of Israel shall be yielded to thee, for their God is angry with them for their wickedness. They be enfamined and lack bread and water, they be constrained to eat their horse and beasts, and to take such holy things as be forbidden in their law, as wheat, wine, and oil, all these things God hath showed to me. And they purpose to waste such things as they ought not touch, and therefore and for their sins they shall be put in the hands of their

enemies, and our Lord hath showed me these things to tell thee. And I thine handmaid shall worship God, and shall go out and pray him, and come in and tell thee what he shall say to me, in such wise that I shall bring thee through the middle of Jerusalem, and thou shalt have all the people of Israel under thee, as the sheep be under the shepherd, in so much there shall not an hound bark against thee. And because these things be said to me by the providence of God, and that God is wroth with them, I am sent to tell thee these things. **The History of Judith**

Forsooth, all these words pleased much to Holofernes, and to his people, and they marvelled of the wisdom of her. And one said to another. There is not such a woman upon earth in sight, in fairness, and in wit of words. And Holofernes said to her: God hath done well that he hath sent thee hither for to let me have knowledge, and if thy God do to me these things he shall be my God, and thou and thy name shall be great in the house of Nebuchadnezzar. Then commanded Holofernes her to go in where his treasure lay, and to abide there, and to give to her meat from his feast, to whom she said that she might not eat of his meat, but that she hath brought meat with her for to eat. Then Holofernes said: When that meat faileth what shall we give to thee to eat? And Judith said that she should not spend all till God shall do in my hands those things that I have thought. And the servants led her into his tabernacle, and she desired that she might go out in the night and before day to pray, and come in again. And the lord commanded his cubiculers that she should go and come at her pleasure three days during. And she went out into the valley of

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Bethulia and baptized her in the water of the well. And she stretched her hands up to the God of Israel, praying the good Lord that he would govern her way for to deliver his people; and thus she did unto the fourth day. Then Holofernes made a great feast, and sent a man of his which was gelded, named Bagoas, for to entreat Judith to lie with his lord, and to come eat and drink with him. And Judith said: What am I that should gainsay my lord's desire? I am at his commandment, whatsomever he will that I do, I shall do, and please him all the days of my life. And she rose and adorned herself with her rich and precious clothes, and went in and stood before Holofernes, and Holofernes' heart was pierced with her beauty, and he burned in the lust and desire of her, and said to her: Sit down and drink in joy, for thou hast found grace before me. Judith said: I shall drink my lord, for my life is magnified this day before all the days of my life. And she ate and drank such as her handmaid had ordained for her. And Holofernes was merry and drank so much wine that he never drank so much in one day in all his life, and was drunken. And at even, when it was night, Holofernes went into his bed, and Bagoas brought Judith in to his chamber and closed the door. And when Judith was alone in the chamber, and Holofernes lay and slept in overmuch drunkenness, Judith said to her handmaid that she should stand without forth before the door of the privy chamber and wait about, and Judith stood before the bed praying with tears and with moving of her lips secretly, saying: O Lord God of Israel, conform me in this hour to the works of my hands, that thou raise up the city of Jerusalem as thou hast promised, and that I may perform this

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that I have thought to do. And when she had thus said, she went to the pillar that was at his bed's head, and took his sword and loosed it, and when she had drawn it out, she took his hair in her hand and said: Confirm me God of Israel in this hour, and smote twice in the neck and cut off his head, and left the body lie still, and took the head and wrapped it in the canape and delivered it to her maid, and bade her to put it in her scrip, and they two went out after their usage to pray. And they passed the tents, and going about the valley came to the gate of the city, and Judith said to the keepers of the walls: Open the gates, for God is with us that hath done great virtue in Israel. And anon when they heard her call, they called the priests of the city, and they came running for they had supposed no more to have seen her, and lighting lights all went about her.

She then entered in and stood up in a high place and commanded silence, and said: Praise ye the Lord God that forsaketh not men hoping in him; and in me his handwoman, hath fulfilled his mercy that he promised to the house of Israel, and hath slain in my hand the enemy of his people this night. And then she brought forth the head of Holofernes and showed it to them saying: Lo! here the head of Holofernes, prince of the chivalry of Assyrians, and lo! the canape of him in which he lay in his drunkenhood, where our Lord hath smitten him by the hand of a woman. Forsooth God liveth, for his angel kept me hence going, there abiding, and from thence hither returning, and the Lord hath not suffered me, his handwoman, to be defouled, but without pollution of sin hath called me again to you joying in his victory, in my escaping and in your deliverance. Knowledge

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ye him all for good, for his mercy is everlasting world without end. And all they, honouring our Lord, said to her: The Lord bless thee in his virtue, for by thee he hath brought our enemies to naught. Then Ozias, the prince of the people, said to her: Blessed be thou of the high God before all women upon earth, and blessed be the Lord that made heaven and earth, that hath addressed thee in the wounds of the head of the prince of our enemies. After this Judith bade that the head should be hanged up on the walls, and at the sun rising every man in his arms issue out upon your enemies, and when their spies shall see you, they shall run into the tent of their prince, to raise him and to make him ready to fight, and when his lords shall see him dead, they shall be smitten with so great dread and fear that they shall flee, whom ye then shall pursue, and God shall bring them and tread them under your feet. Then Achior seeing the virtue of the God of Israel, left his old heathen's customs and believed in God, and was circumcised in his privy member, and put himself to the people of Israel, and all the succession of his kindred unto this day. Then at the springing of the day they hung the head of Holofernes on the walls, and every man took his arms and went out with great noise, which thing seeing, the spies ran together to the tabernacle of Holofernes, and came making noise for to make him to arise, and that he should awake, but no man was so hardy to knock or enter into his privy chamber. But when the dukes and leaders of thousands came, and other, they said to the privy chamberlains: Go and awake your lord, for the mice be gone out of their caves and be ready to call us to battle.

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Then Bagoas his bawd, went into his privy chamber and stood before the curtain, and clapped his hands together, weening he had slept with Judith. And when he perceived no moving of him, he drew the curtain and seeing the dead body of Holofernes, without head, lying in his blood, cried with great voice, weeping and rending his clothes, and went in to the tabernacle of Judith and found her not, and started out to the people and said: A woman of the Hebrews hath made confusion in the house of Nebuchadnezzar, she hath slain Holofernes, and he is dead, and she hath his head with her. And when the princes and captains of the Assyrians heard this, anon they rent their clothes, and intolerable dread fell on them, and were sore troubled in their wits and made a horrible cry in their tents. And when all the host had heard how Holofernes was beheaded, counsel and mind flew from them, and with great trembling for succour began to flee, in such wise that none would speak with other, but with their heads bowed down fled for to escape from the Hebrews, whom they saw armed coming upon them, and departed fleeing by fields and ways of hills and valleys. And the sons of Israel, seeing them fleeing, followed them, crying with trumps and shouting after them, and slew and smote down all them that they overtook. And Ozias sent forth unto all the cities and regions of Israel, and they sent after all the young men and valiant to pursue them by sword, and so they did unto the uttermost coasts of Israel. The other men soothly, that were in Bethulia, went in to the tents of the Assyrians, and took all the prey that the Assyrians had left, and when the men that had pursued them were returned, they took all their beasts and all

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the movable goods and things that they had left, so much that every man from the most to the least were made rich by the prey that they took. Then Joachim the high bishop of Jerusalem came unto Bethulia, with all the priests, for to see Judith, and when she came tofore them all, they blessed her with one voice, saying: Thou glory of Jerusalem, thou gladness of Israel, thou the worship doing of our people, thou didst manly, and thine heart is comforted because thou lovedst chastity and knewest no man after the death of thy husband, and therefore the hand of God hath comforted thee. And therefore thou shalt be blessed world without end, and all the people said: Fiat! fiat! be it done, be it done. Certainly the spoils of the Assyrians were unnethe gathered and assembled together in thirty days, of the people of Israel, but all the proper riches that were appertaining to Holofernes and could be found that had been his, they were given to Judith as well gold, silver, gems, clothes, as all other appurtenances to household; and all was delivered to her of the people, and the folks, with women and maidens, joyed in organs and harps. Then Judith sang this song unto God saying: Begin ye in timbrels, sing ye to the Lord in cymbals, mannerly sing to him a new psalm. Fully joy ye, and inwardly call ye his name, and so forth. And for this great miracle and victory all the people came to Jerusalem for to give laud, honour, and worship unto our Lord God. And after they were purified they offered sacrifices, vows, and behests unto God, and the joy of this victory was solemnised during three months, and after that, each went home again into his own city and house, and Judith returned into Bethulia, and was made more great and clear to all men of the land of Israel.

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She was joined to the virtue of chastity, so that she knew no man all the days of her life after the death of Manasses, her husband, and dwelled in the house of her husband an hundred and five years, and she left her demoiselle free. And after this she died and is buried in Bethulia and all the people bewailed her seven days. During her life after this journey was no trouble among the Jews, and the day of this victory of the Hebrews was accepted for a feastful day, and hallowed of the Jews and numbered among their feasts unto this day.

THE LIFE OF S. ANDREW

After the feasts of our Lord Jesu Christ tofore set in order follow the legends of Saints, and first of S. Andrew.

The Life of S. Andrew

ANDREW is expounded, and is as much as to say as fair, or answering unto strength, and it is said of andor, that is as much to say as strength; or Andrew is said thus, as antipos of ana, which is to say high, and of tropos which is conversion, so that Andrew is to say, a man highly converted, and in heaven addressed unto his maker. He was fair in his life, answering in wisdom and in doctrine, strong in pain and converted high in glory. The priests and deacons of Achaia wrote his passion like as they had seen it with their eyes.

Andrew and some other disciples were called three times of our Lord. He called them first in the knowledging of him, as when S. Andrew was with John the Baptist, his master, and another disciple; he heard that John said: Lo! here the Lamb of God; and then he went anon with another disciple, and came to Jesu Christ and abode with him all that day. And then S. Andrew found Simon, his brother, and brought him to Jesu Christ, and the next day following they went to their craft of fishing. And after this he called them the second time by the stagne of Gennesereth, which is named the sea of Galilee.

He entered into the ship of Simon and of Andrew, and there was taken great multitude of fish, and he called James and John, which were in another ship, and they followed him, and after went into their proper places. The Life of S. Andrew

After this he called them from their fishing, and said: Come, follow me, I shall make you fishers of men. Then they left their ships and nets, and followed him, and after this they abode with him, and went no more to their own houses. And howbeit he called Andrew and some other to be apostles, of which calling, Matthew saith in the third chapter: He called to him them that he would. And after the ascension of our Lord, the apostles were departed, and Andrew preached in Scythia and Matthew in Murgondy. And the men of this country refused utterly the preaching of S. Matthew, and drew out his eyes, and cast him in prison fast bounden. In the meanwhile an angel, sent from our Lord, and commanded him to go to S. Matthew into Murgondy, and he answered that he knew not the way. And then the angel commanded him that he should go unto the seaside, and that he should enter into the first ship that he should find, and so he did gladly, in accomplishing the commandment, and went into the city by the leading of the angel, and had wind propitious. And when he was come he found the prison open, where S. Matthew was in; and when he saw him he wept sore and worshipped him; and then our Lord rendered and gave again to S. Matthew his two eyes and his sight. And then S. Matthew departed from thence and came into Antioch, and S. Andrew abode in Murgondy, and they of the country were wroth that S. Matthew was so escaped. Then took they S.

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Andrew and drew him through the places, his hands bounden in such wise that the blood ran out. He prayed for them to Jesu Christ, and converted them by his prayer; and from thence he came to Antioch. This that is said of the blinding of S. Matthew, I suppose that it is not true, nor that the evangelist was not so infirm, but that he might get for his sight that S. Andrew gat for him so lightly.

It was so that a young man came and followed S. Andrew, against the will of all his parents; and on a time his parents set fire on the house where he was with the apostle, and when the flame surmounted right high, the child took a brush full of water and sprinkled withal the fire, and anon the fire quenched. And then his friends and parents said: Our son is made an enchanter. And as they would have gone up by the ladders, they were suddenly made blind, that they saw not the ladders, and then one of them recried and said: Wherefore enforce ye you against them? God fighteth for them and ye see it not. Cease ye and leave off, lest the ire of our Lord fall on you. Then many of them that saw this believed in our Lord, and the parents died within forty days after, and were put in one sepulchre.

There was a woman with child, joined in wedlock with a homicide who was troubled greatly upon her deliverance; and at the time of childing she might not be delivered. She bade her sister to go to Diana and pray to her that she help me. She went and prayed, and Diana said to her, which was the devil in an idol: Wherefore prayest thou to me? I may not help ne profit thee, but go unto Andrew the apostle which may help thee and thy sister. And she went to him,

and brought him to her sister, which travailed in great pain, and began to perish. And the apostle said to her: By good right thou sufferest this pain; thou conceivedst in treachery and sin, and thou counselledst with the devil. Repent thee, and believe in Jesu Christ, and thou shalt be anon delivered of thy child. And when she believed and was repentant, she was delivered of her child, and the pain and sorrow passed and ceased. **The Life of S. Andrew**

An old man called Nicholas by name, went unto the apostle and said to him: Sir, I have lived fifty years, and always in lechery. And I took on a time a gospel, in praying God that he would give me from then forthon continence. But I am accustomed in this sin, and full of evil delectation, in such wise that I shall return to this sin accustomed. On a time that I was inflamed by luxury, I went to the bordel, and forgat the gospel upon me, and anon the foul woman said: Go hence thou old man, for thou art an angel of God, touch me not, nor come not near me, for I see marvel upon thee. And I was abashed of the word of the woman, and I remembered that I had the gospel upon me, wherefore I beseech thee to pray God for me and for my health. And when S. Andrew heard this he began to weep, and prayed from tierce unto nones. And when he arose he would not eat, and said: I shall eat no meat till I know whether our Lord shall have pity of this old man. And when he had fasted five days, a voice came to S. Andrew and said to him: Andrew, thy request is granted for the old man, for like as thou hast fasted and made thyself lean, so shall he fast and make himself lean by fastings for to be saved. And so he did, for he fasted six months to bread and water, and after that he

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rested in peace and good works. Then came a voice that said: I have gotten Nicholas by thy prayers whom I had lost.

A young christian man said to S. Andrew: My mother saw that I was fair, and required me for to have to do sin with her; and when I would not consent to her in no manner, she went to the judge, and would return and lay to me the sin of so great a felony. Pray for me that I die not so untruly; for when I shall be accused I shall hold my peace and speak not one word, and have liefer to die than to defame and slander my mother so foully. Thus came he to judgment, and his mother accused him, saying that he would have defouled her. And it was asked of him oft if it was so as she said, and he answered nothing. Then said S. Andrew to her: Thou art most cruel of all women, which for the accomplishment of thy lechery wilt make thy son to die. Then said this woman to the provost: Sir, sith that my son came, and accompanied with this man, he would have done his will with me, but I withstood him that he might not. And anon the provost and judge commanded that the son should be put in a sack anointed with glue, and thrown into the river, and S. Andrew to be put in prison till he had advised him how he might torment him. But S. Andrew made his prayer to God, and anon came an horrible thunder, which feared them all, and made the earth to tremble strongly, and the woman was smitten with the thunder unto the death. And the other prayed the apostle that they might not perish, and he prayed for them, and the tempest ceased. Thus then the provost believed in God, and all his meiny.

After this, as the apostle was in the city of Nice,

the citizens said to him that there were seven devils without the city, by the highway, which slew all them that passed forthby. And the apostle commanded them to come to him, which came in the likeness of dogs, and sith he commanded them that they should go whereas they should not grieve ne do harm to any man; and anon they vanished away. And when the people saw this they received the faith of Jesu Christ. And when the apostle came to the gate of another city there was brought out a young man dead. The apostle demanded what was befallen him, and it was told him that seven dogs came and strangled him. Then the apostle wept and said: O Lord God, I know well that these were the devils that I put out of Nice; and after said to the father of him that was dead: What wilt thou give to me if I raise him? And he said: I have nothing so dear as him, I shall give him to thee. And anon the apostle made his prayers unto almighty God, and raised him from death to life, and he went and followed him. **The Life of S. Andrew**

On a time there were forty men by number, which were coming by the sea, sailing unto the apostle, for to receive of him the doctrine of the faith. And the devil raised and moved a great storm and so horrible a torment that all they were drowned together. And when their bodies were brought tofore the apostle, he raised them from death to life anon, and there they said all that was befallen to them. And therefore it is read in an hymn that he rendered the life to young men drowned in the sea. And the blessed S. Andrew, whilst he was in Achaia, he replenished all the country with churches and converted the people to the faith of Jesu Christ and informed the wife of

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Ægeas, which was provost and judge of the town, in the faith, and baptized her. And when Ægeas heard this he came into the city of Patras and constrained the christians to sacrifice. And S. Andrew came unto him, and said: It behoveth thee which hast deserved to be a judge, to know thy judge which is in heaven, and he so known, to worship him, and so worshipping, withdraw thy courage from the false gods. And Ægeas said: Thou art Andrew that preachest a false law, which the princes of Rome have commanded to be destroyed. To whom Andrew said: The princes of Rome knew never how the son of God came and taught and informed them that the idols be devils, and he that teacheth such things angereth God, and he, so angered, departeth from them that he heareth them not, and therefore be they caitiffs of the devil and be so illused and deceived that they issue out of the body all naked, and bear nothing with them but sins.

And Ægeas said to him: These be the vanities that your Jesus preached, which was nailed on the gallows of the cross. To whom Andrew said: He received with his agreement the gibbet of the cross, not for his culp and trespass, but for our redemption. And Ægeas said: When he was delivered of his disciple, taken and holden with the Jews, and crucified by the knyghts, how sayst thou that it was by his agreement? Then S. Andrew began to show by five reasons that Jesu Christ received death by his own agreement and will, forasmuch as he came tofore his passion, and said to his disciples that it should be, when he said: We shall go up to Jerusalem, and the son of the maid shall be betrayed. And also for that Peter would withdraw him, he reproved him, and said:

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Go after me, Sathanas. And also for that he showed that he had power to suffer death, and to rise again when he said: I have power to put away my soul and to take it again. And also for that he knew tofore him that betrayed him, when he gave him his supper, and showed him not. And also for that he chose the place where he should be taken, for he knew well that the traitor should come. And S. Andrew said that he had been at all these things, and yet he said more, that the mystery of the cross was great. To whom Ægeas said: It may not be said mystery, but torment, and if thou wilt not grant to my sayings, truly I shall make thee prove this mystery. And Andrew said to him: If I doubted the gibbet of the cross I would not preach the glory thereof. I will that thou hear the mystery, and if thou knew and believedst on it thou shouldst be saved. Then he showed to him the mystery of the cross, and assigned five reasons. The first is this: Forasmuch as the first man that deserved death was because of the tree, in breaking the commandment of God, then is it thing convenable that the second man should put away that death, in suffering the same on the tree. The second was that, he that was made of earth not corrupted, and was breaker of the commandment, then was it thing convenable that he that should repel this default, should be born of a virgin. The third; for so much as Adam had stretched his hand disordinately to the fruit forbidden, it was thing convenable that the new Adam should stretch his hands on the cross. The fourth; for so much as Adam had tasted sweetly the fruit forbidden, it is therefore reason that it be put away by thing contrary; so that Jesu Christ was fed with bitter gall. The fifth; for-

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asmuch as Jesu Christ gave to us his immortality, it is thing reasonable, that he take our mortality. For if Jesu Christ had not been dead, man had never been made immortal. And then said Ægeas: Tell to thy disciples such vanities, and obey thou to me, and make sacrifice unto the Gods almighty. And then said S. Andrew: I offer every day unto God Almighty, a lamb without spot, and after that he is received of all the people, so liveth he and is all whole. Then demanded Ægeas how that might be. And Andrew said: Take the form for to be a disciple, and thou shalt know it well. I shall demand thee, said Ægeas, by torments. Then he being all angry, commanded that he should be enclosed in prison, and on the morn he came to judgment, and the blessed S. Andrew unto the sacrifice of the idols. And Ægeas commanded to be said to him: If thou obey not to me, I shall do hang thee on the cross, for so much as thou hast praised it. And thus as he menaced him of many torments S. Andrew said to him: Think what torment that is most grievous that thou mayst do to me, and the more I suffer, the more I shall be agreeable to my king, because I shall be most firm in the torments and pain. Then commanded Ægeas that he should be beaten of twenty-one men, and that he should be so beaten, bounden by the feet and hands unto the cross, to the end that his pain should endure the longer. And when he was led unto the cross, there ran much people thither saying: The blood of the innocent is damned without cause. And the apostle prayed them that they should not empesh nor let his torment ne martyrdom. And when he saw the cross from far he saluted it, and said: All hail cross which art dedicate in the body of Jesu Christ, and wert

adorned with the members of him, as of precious stones. Tofore that our Lord ascended on thee, thou wert the power earthly, now thou art the love of heaven; thou shalt receive me by my desire. I come to thee surely and gladly so that thou receive me gladly as disciple of him that hung on thee. For I have alway worshipped thee and have desired thee to embrace. O thou cross which hast received beauty and noblesse of the members of our Lord, whom I have so long desired and curiously loved, and whom my courage hath so much desired and coveted, take me from hence, and yield me to my master, to the end that he may receive me by thee. And in thus saying, he despoiled and unclad him, and gave his clothes unto the butchers. And then they hung him on the cross, like as to them was commanded. And there he lived two days, and preached to twenty thousand men that were there. Then all the company swore the death of Ægeas, and said: The holy man and debonair ought not to suffer this. Then came thither Ægeas for to take him down off the cross. And when Andrew saw him he said: Wherefore art thou come to me, Ægeas? If it be for penance thou shalt have it, and if it be for to take me down, know thou for certain thou shalt not take me hereof alive; for I see now my lord and king that abideth for me. Therewith they would have unbound him, and they might in nowise touch him for their arms were bynomen and of no power. And when the holy S. Andrew saw that the world would have taken him down off the cross he made this orison hanging on the cross, as S. Austin saith in the book of penance: Sire, suffer me not to descend from this cross alive, for it is time that thou command my body to the earth, for I have born long

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the charge, and have so much watched upon that which was commanded to me, and have so long travailed, that I would now be delivered of this obedience, and be taken away from this agreeable charge. I remember that it is much grievous, in proud bearing, in doubting, unsteadfast in nourishing, and have gladly laboured in the refraining of them. Sire, thou knowest how oft the world hath entended to withdraw me from the purity of contemplation, how oft he hath entended to awake me from the sleep of my sweet rest, how much and how oft times he hath made me to sorrow, and as much as I have had might I have resisted it right debonairly in fighting against it, and have by thy work and aid surmounted it: and I require of thee just and debonair guerdon and reward, and that thou command that I go not again thereto, but I yield to thee that which thou hast delivered me. Command it to another and empesh me no more, but keep me in the resurrection, so that I may receive the merit of my labour. Command my body unto the earth, so that it behoveth no more to wake, but let it be stretched freely to thee, which art fountain of joy never failing. And when he had said this, there came from heaven a right great shining light, which environed him by the space of half an hour, in such wise that no man might see him. And when this light departed he yielded and rendered therewith his spirit. And Maximilla, the wife of Ægeas, took away the body of the apostle, and buried it honourably. And ere that Ægeas was come again to his house, he was ravished with a devil by the way, and died tofore them all. And it is said that out of the sepulchre of S. Andrew cometh manna like unto meal, and oil which hath a right sweet savour and odour.

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And by that is shewed to the people of the country when there shall be plenty of goods. For when ther cometh but little of manna, the earth shall bring forth but little fruit, and when it cometh abundantly, the earth bringeth forth fruit plenteously. And this might well happen of old time, for the body of him was transported into Constantinople.

There was a bishop that led an holy and religious life, and loved S. Andrew by great devotion, and worshipped him above all other saints, so that in all his works he remembered him every day, and said certain prayers in the honour of God and S. Andrew, in such wise that the enemy had envy on him, and set him for to deceive him with all his malice, and transformed him into the form of a right fair woman, and came to the palace of the bishop, and said that she would be confessed to him. And the bishop bade her to go confess her to his penitencer, which had plain power of him. And she sent him word again that she would not reveal nor show the secrets of her confession to none but to him, and so the bishop commanded her to come; and she said to him: Sir, I pray thee that thou have mercy on me; I am so as ye see in the years of my youth, and a maid, and was deliciously nourished from my infancy, and born of royal lineage, but I am come alone, in a strange habit; for my father which is a right mighty king would give me to a prince by marriage; whereto I answer that I have horror of all beds of marriage, and I have given my virginity to Jesu Christ for ever, and therefore I may not consent to carnal copulation. And in the end he constrained me so much that I must consent to his will or suffer divers torments; so that I am fled secretly away, and

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had liefer be in exile, than to break and corrupt my faith to my spouse. And because I hear the praising of your right holy life, I am fled unto you and to your guard, in hope that I may find with you place of rest, whereas I may be secret in contemplation, and eschew the evil perils of this present life, and flee the diverse tribulations of the world. Of which thing the bishop marvelled him greatly, as well for the great noblesse of her lineage, as for the beauty of her body, for the burning of the great love of God, and for the honest fair speaking of this woman. So that the bishop answered to her, with a meek and pleasant voice: Daughter, be sure and doubt nothing; for he for whose love thou hast despised thyself and these things, shall give to thee the great thing. In this time present is little glory or joy, but it shall be in time to come. And I which am sergeant of the same, offer me to thee, and my goods; and choose thee an house where it shall please thee, and I will that thou dine with me this day. And she answered and said: Father, require of me no such thing, for by adventure some evil suspicion might come thereof. And also the resplendour of your good renomee might be thereby impaired. To whom the bishop answered: We shall be many together, and I shall not be with you alone, and therefore there may be no suspicion of evil. Then they came to the table, and were set, that one against that other, and the other folk here and there, and the bishop entendeth much to her, and beheld her alway in the visage, and he marvelled of her great beauty. And thus as he fixed his eyes on her his courage was hurt, and the ancient enemy, when he saw the heart of him, hurt [him] with a grievous dart. And this devil apperceived

it and began to increase her beauty more and more, insomuch that the bishop was then ready for to require her to sin when he might. The Life of S. Andrew

Then a pilgrim came and began to smite strongly at the gate or door, and they would not open it. Then he cried and knocked more strongly; and the bishop asked of the woman if she would that the pilgrim should enter. And she said; Men should ask first of him a question, grievous enough, and if he could answer thereto, he should be received, and if he could not, he should abide without, and not come in, as he that were not worthy but unwitting. And all agreed to her sentence, and enquired which of them were sufficient to put the question. And when none was found sufficient, the bishop said: None of us is so sufficient as ye, dame, for ye pass us all in fair speaking, and shine in wisdom more than we all; propose ye the question. Then she said: Demand ye of him, which is the greatest marvel that ever God made in little space. And then one went and demanded the pilgrim. The pilgrim answered to the messenger that it was the diversity and excellence of the faces of men: for among all so many men as have been sith the beginning of the world unto the end, two men might not be found of whom their faces were like and semblable in all things. And when the answer was heard, all they marvelled and said that this was a very and right good answer of the question. Then the woman said: Let the second question be proposed to him, which shall be more grievous to answer to, for to prove the better the wisdom of him, which was this: Whether the earth is higher than all the heaven? And when it was demanded of him the pilgrim answered: In the heaven imperial where the body of Jesu Christ is, which

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is form of our flesh, he is more high than all the heaven. Of this answer they marvelled all when the messenger reported it, and praised marvellously his wisdom. Consequently she said the third question, which was more dark and grievous to assoil. For to prove the third time his wisdom, and that then he be worthy to be received at the bishop's table, demand and ask of him; How much space is from the abysm unto the same heaven. Then the messenger demanded of the pilgrim, and he answered him: Go to him that sent thee to me and ask of him this thing, for he knoweth better than I, and can better answer to it, for he hath measured this space when he fell from heaven into the abysm, and I never measured it. This is nothing a woman but it is a devil which hath taken the form of a woman. And when the messenger heard this, he was sore afraid and told tofore them all this that he had heard. And when the bishop heard this and all other, they were sore afraid. And anon forthwith, the devil vanished away tofore their eyes.

And after, the bishop came again to himself, and reproved himself bitterly, weeping, repenting and requiring pardon of his sin, and sent a messenger for to fetch and bring in the pilgrim, but he found him never after. Then the bishop assembled the people, and told to them the manner of this thing, and prayed them that they would all be in orisons and prayers, in such wise that our Lord would show to some person who this pilgrim was which had delivered him from so great peril. And then it was showed that night to the bishop that it was S. Andrew which had put him in the habit of a pilgrim for the deliverance of him. Then began the bishop more and more to have devo-

tion and remembrance to S. Andrew than he had tofore. **The Life of S. Nicholas**

The provost of a city had taken away a field from the church of S. Andrew, and by the prayer of the bishop he was fallen into a strong fever. And then he prayed the bishop that he would pray for him, and he would again yield the field. And when the bishop had prayed for him, and he had his health, he took the field again. Then the bishop put himself to prayer and orisons, and brake all the lamps of the church, and said: There shall none of them be lighted till that our Lord hath venged him on his enemy, and that the church have recovered that which she hath lost. And then the provost was strongly tormented with fevers, and sent to the bishop by messengers that he should pray for him, and he would yield again his field and another semblable. Then the bishop answered: I have heretofore prayed for him, and God heard and granted my prayer, and when he was whole, he took from me again the field. And then the provost made him to be borne to the bishop, and constrained him for to enter into the church for to pray. And the bishop entered into the church, and anon the provost died, and the field was re-established unto the church. Et sic est finis.

Here beginneth the life of S. Nicholas the Bishop.

Nicholas is said of Nichos, which is to say victory, and of laos, people, so Nicholas is as much as to say as victory of people, that is, victory of sins, which be foul people. Or else he is said, victory of people, because he en-

The Life of S. Nicholas

seigned and taught much people by his doctrine to overcome vices and sins. Or Nicholas is said of Nichor, that is the resplendour or shining of the people, for he had in him things that make shining and clearness. After this S. Ambrose saith: The word of God, very confession, and holy thought, make a man clean. And the doctors of Greece write his legend, and some others say that Methodius the patriarch wrote it in Greek, and John the deacon translated it into Latin and adjousted thereto many things.

Nicholas, citizen of the city of Patras, was born of rich and holy kin, and his father was Epiphanes and his mother Johane. He was begotten in the first flower of their age, and from that time forthon they lived in continence and led an heavenly life. Then the first day that he was washed and bained, he addressed him right up in the bason, and he would not take the breast nor the pap but once on the Wednesday and once on the Friday, and in his young age he eschewed the plays and japes of other young children. He used and haunted gladly holy church; and all that he might understand of holy scripture he executed it in deed and work after his power. And when his father and mother were departed out of this life, he began to think how he might distribute his riches, and not to the praising of the world but to the honour and glory of God. And it was so that one, his neighbour, had then three daughters, virgins, and he was a nobleman: but for the poverty of them together, they were constrained, and in very purpose to abandon them to the sin of lechery, so that by the gain and winning of their infamy they might be sustained. And when the holy man Nicholas knew hereof he had great horror of this villainy, and threw by

night secretly into the house of the man a mass of gold wrapped in a cloth. And when the man arose in the morning, he found this mass of gold, and rendered to God therefor great thankings, and therewith he married his oldest daughter. And a little while after this holy servant of God threw in another mass of gold, which the man found, and thanked God, and purposed to wake, for to know him that so had aided him in his poverty. And after a few days Nicholas doubled the mass of gold, and cast it into the house of this man. He awoke by the sound of the gold, and followed Nicholas, which fled from him, and he said to him: Sir, flee not away so but that I may see and know thee. Then he ran after him more hastily, and knew that it was Nicholas; and anon he kneeled down, and would have kissed his feet, but the holy man would not, but required him not to tell nor discover this thing as long as he lived. **The Life of S. Nicholas**

After this the bishop of Mirea died and other bishops assembled for to purvey to this church a bishop. And there was, among the others, a bishop of great authority, and all the election was in him. And when he had warned all for to be in fastings and in prayers, this bishop heard that night a voice which said to him that, at the hour of matins, he should take heed to the doors of the church, and him that should come first to the church, and have the name of Nicholas they should sacre him bishop. And he showed this to the other bishops and admonished them for to be all in prayers; and he kept the doors. And this was a marvellous thing, for at the hour of matins, like as he had been sent from God, Nicholas arose tofore all other. And the bishop took him when he was come and demanded of him his name.

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And he, which was simple as a dove, inclined his head, and said: I have to name Nicholas. Then the bishop said to him: Nicholas, servant and friend of God, for your holiness ye shall be bishop of this place. And sith they brought him to the church, howbeit that he refused it strongly, yet they set him in the chair. And he followed, as he did tofore in all things, in humility and honesty of manners. He woke in prayer and made his body lean, he eschewed company of women, he was humble in receiving all things, profitable in speaking, joyous in admonishing, and cruel in correcting.

It is read in a chronicle that, the blessed Nicholas was at the Council of Nice; and on a day, as a ship with mariners were in perishing on the sea, they prayed and required devoutly Nicholas, servant of God, saying: If those things that we have heard of thee said be true, prove them now. And anon a man appeared in his likeness, and said: Lo! see ye me not? ye called me, and then he began to help them in their exploit of the sea, and anon the tempest ceased. And when they were come to his church, they knew him without any man to show him to them, and yet they had never seen him. And then they thanked God and him of their deliverance. And he bade them to attribute it to the mercy of God, and to their belief, and nothing to his merits.

It was so on a time that all the province of S. Nicolas suffered great famine, in such wise that victual failed. And then this holy man heard say that certain ships laden with wheat were arrived in the haven. And anon he went thither and prayed the mariners that they would succour the perished at least with an hundred muyes of wheat of every

ship. And they said: Father we dare not, for it is meted and measured, and we must give reckoning thereof in the garners of the Emperor in Alexandria. And the holy man said to them: Do this that I have said to you, and I promise, in the truth of God, that it shall not be lessed or minished when ye shall come to the garners. And when they had delivered so much out of every ship, they came into Alexandria and delivered the measure that they had received. And then they recounted the miracle to the ministers of the Emperor, and worshipped and praised strongly God and his servant Nicholas. Then this holy man distributed the wheat to every man after that he had need, in such wise that it sufficed for two years, not only for to sell, but also to sow. And in this country the people served idols and worshipped the false image of the cursed Diana. And to the time of this holy man, many of them had some customs of the paynims, for to sacrifice to Diana under a sacred tree; but this good man made them of all the country to cease then these customs, and commanded to cut off the tree. Then the devil was angry and wroth against him, and made an oil that burned, against nature, in water, and burned stones also. And then he transformed him in the guise of a religious woman, and put him in a little boat, and encountered pilgrims that sailed in the sea towards this holy saint, and areasoned them thus, and said: I would fain go to this holy man, but I may not, wherefore I pray you to bear this oil into his church, and for the remembrance of me, that ye anoint the walls of the hall; and anon he vanished away. Then they saw anon after another ship with honest persons, among whom there was one like to S.

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Nicholas, which spake to them softly: What hath this woman said to you, and what hath she brought? And they told to him all by order. And he said to them: This is the evil and foul Diana; and to the end that ye know that I say truth, cast that oil into the sea. And when they had cast it, a great fire caught it in the sea, and they saw it long burn against nature. Then they came to this holy man and said to him: Verily thou art he that appeared to us in the sea and deliveredst us from the sea and awaits of the devil.

And in this time certain men rebelled against the emperor; and the emperor sent against them three princes Nepotian, Ursyn, and Apollyn. And they came into the port Adriatic, for the wind, which was contrary to them; and the blessed Nicholas commanded them to dine with him, for he would keep his people from the ravin that they made. And whilst they were at dinner, the consul, corrupt by money, had commanded three innocent knights to be beheaded. And when the blessed Nicholas knew this, he prayed these three princes that they would much hastily go with him. And when they were come where they should be beheaded, he found them on their knees, and blindfold, and the righter brandished his sword over their heads. Then S. Nicholas embraced with the love of God, set him hardily against the righter, and took the sword out of his hand, and threw it from him, and unbound the innocents, and led them with him all safe. And anon he went to the judgment to the consul, and found the gates closed, which anon he opened by force. And the consul came anon and saluted him: and this holy man having this salutation in despite, said to him: Thou enemy of God, corrupter of the law,

wherefore hast thou consented to so great evil and felony, how darest thou look on us? And when he had sore chidden and reproved him, he repented, and at the prayer of the three princes he received him to penance. After, when the messengers of the emperor had received his benediction, they made their gear ready and departed, and subdued their enemies to the empire without shedding of blood, and sith returned to the emperor, and were worshipfully received. And after this it happed that some other in the emperor's house had envy on the weal of these three princes, and accused them to the emperor of high treason, and did so much by prayer and by gifts that they caused the emperor to be so full of ire that he commanded them to prison, and without other demand, he commanded that they should be slain that same night. And when they knew it by their keeper, they rent their clothes and wept bitterly; and then Nepotian remembered him how S. Nicholas had delivered the three innocents, and admonested the others that they should require his aid and help. And thus as they prayed S. Nicholas appeared to them, and after appeared to Constantine the emperor, and said to him: Wherefore hast thou taken these three princes with so great wrong, and hast judged them to death without trespass? Arise up hastily, and command that they be not executed, or I shall pray to God that he move battle against thee, in which thou shalt be overthrown, and shalt be made meat to beasts. And the emperor demanded: What art thou that art entered by night into my palace and durst say to me such words? And he said to him: I am Nicholas bishop of Mirea. And in like wise he appeared to the provost, and feared

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him, saying with a fearful voice: Thou that hast lost mind and wit, wherefore hast thou consented to the death of innocents? Go forth anon and do thy part to deliver them, or else thy body shall rot, and be eaten with worms, and thy meiny shall be destroyed. And he asked him: Who art thou that so menacest me? And he answered: Know thou that I am Nicholas, the bishop of the city of Mirea. Then that one awoke that other, and each told to other their dreams, and anon sent for them that were in prison, to whom the emperor said: What art magic or sorcery can ye, that ye have this night by illusion caused us to have such dreams? And they said that they were none enchanters ne knew no witchcraft, and also that they had not deserved the sentence of death. Then the emperor said to them: Know ye well a man named Nicholas? And when they heard speak of the name of the holy saint, they held up their hands towards heaven, and prayed our Lord that by the merits of S. Nicholas they might be delivered of this present peril. And when the emperor had heard of them the life and miracles of S. Nicholas, he said to them: Go ye forth, and yield ye thankings to God, which hath delivered you by the prayer of this holy man, and worship ye him; and bear ye to him of your jewels, and pray ye him that he threaten me no more, but that he pray for me and for my realm unto our Lord. And a while after, the said princes went unto the holy man, and fell down on their knees humbly at his feet, saying: Verily thou art the sergeant of God, and the very worshipper and lover of Jesu Christ. And when they had all told this said thing by order, he lift up his hands to heaven and gave thankings and praisings to God, and sent

again the princes, well informed, into their countries.

And when it pleased our Lord to have him depart out this world, he prayed our Lord that he would send him his angels; and inclining his head he saw the angels come to him, whereby he knew well that he should depart, and began this holy psalm: In te domine speravi, unto, in manus tuas, and so saying: Lord, into thine hands I commend my spirit, he rendered up his soul and died, the year of our Lord three hundred and forty-three, with great melody sung of the celestial company. And when he was buried in a tomb of marble, a fountain of oil sprang out from the head unto his feet; and unto this day holy oil issueth out of his body, which is much available to the health of sicknesses of many men. And after him in his see succeeded a man of good and holy life, which by envy was put out of his bishopric. And when he was out of his see the oil ceased to run, and when he was restored again thereto, the oil ran again.

Long after this the Turks destroyed the city of Mirea, and then came thither forty-seven knights of Bari, and four monks showed to them the sepulchre of S. Nicholas. And they opened it and found the bones swimming in the oil, and they bare them away honourably into the city of Bari, in the year of our Lord ten hundred and eighty-seven.

There was a man that had borrowed of a Jew a sum of money, and sware upon the altar of S. Nicholas that he would render and pay it again as soon as he might, and gave none other pledge. And this man held this money so long, that the Jew demanded and asked his money, and he said

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that he had paid him. Then the Jew made him to come tofore the law in judgment, and the oath was given to the debtor. And he brought with him an hollow staff, in which he had put the money in gold, and he leant upon the staff. And when he should make his oath and swear, he delivered his staff to the Jew to keep and hold whilst he should swear, and then sware that he had delivered to him more than he ought to him. And when he had made the oath, he demanded his staff again of the Jew, and he nothing knowing of his malice delivered it to him. Then this deceiver went his way, and anon after, him list sore to sleep, and laid him in the way, and a cart with four wheels came with great force and slew him, and brake the staff with gold that it spread abroad. And when the Jew heard this, he came thither sore moved, and saw the fraud, and many said to him that he should take to him the gold; and he refused it, saying, But if he that was dead were not raised again to life by the merits of S. Nicholas, he would not receive it, and if he came again to life, he would receive baptism and become Christian. Then he that was dead arose, and the Jew was christened.

Another Jew saw the virtuous miracles of S. Nicholas, and did do make an image of the saint, and set it in his house, and commanded him that he should keep well his house when he went out, and that he should keep well all his goods, saying to him: Nicholas, lo! here be all my goods, I charge thee to keep them, and if thou keep them not well, I shall avenge me on thee in beating and tormenting thee. And on a time, when the Jew was out, thieves came and robbed all his goods, and left, unborne away, only the image. And when the

Jew came home he found him robbed of all his goods. He areasoned the image saying these words: Sir Nicholas, I had set you in my house for to keep my goods from thieves, wherefore have ye not kept them? Ye shall receive sorrow and torments, and shall have pain for the thieves. I shall avenge my loss, and refrain my woodness in beating thee. And then took the Jew the image, and beat it, and tormented it cruelly. Then happed a great marvel, for when the thieves departed the goods, the holy saint, like as he had been in his array, appeared to the thieves, and said to them: Wherefore have I been beaten so cruelly for you and have so many torments? See how my body is hewed and broken; see how that the red blood runneth down by my body; go ye fast and restore it again, or else the ire of God Almighty shall make you as to be one out of his wit, and that all men shall know your felony, and that each of you shall be hanged. And they said: Who art thou that sayest to us such things? And he said to them: I am Nicholas the servant of Jesu Christ, whom the Jew hath so cruelly beaten for his goods that ye bare away. Then they were afeard, and came to the Jew, and heard what he had done to the image, and they told him the miracle, and delivered to him again all his goods. And thus came the thieves to the way of truth, and the Jew to the way of Jesu Christ. A man, for the love of his son, that went to school for to learn, hallowed, every year, the feast of S. Nicholas much solemnly. On a time it happed that the father had do make ready the dinner, and called many clerks to this dinner. And the devil came to the gate in the habit of a pilgrim for to demand alms; and the father anon commanded

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his son that he should give alms to the pilgrim. He followed him as he went for to give to him alms, and when he came to the quarfox the devil caught the child and strangled him. And when the father heard this he sorrowed much strongly and wept, and bare the body into his chamber, and began to cry for sorrow, and say: Bright sweet son, how is it with thee? S. Nicholas, is this the guerdon that ye have done to me because I have so long served you? And as he said these words, and other semblable, the child opened his eyes, and awoke like as he had been asleep, and arose up tofore all, and was raised from death to life.

Another nobleman prayed to S. Nicholas that he would, by his merits, get of our Lord that he might have a son, and promised that he would bring his son to the church, and would offer up to him a cup of gold. Then the son was born and came to age, and the father commanded to make a cup, and the cup pleased him much, and he retained it for himself, and did do make another of the same value. And they went sailing in a ship toward the church of S. Nicholas, and when the child would have filled the cup, he fell into the water with the cup, and anon was lost, and came no more up. Yet nevertheless the father performed his avow, in weeping much tenderly for his son; and when he came to the altar of S. Nicholas he offered the second cup, and when he had offered it, it fell down, like as one had cast it under the altar. And he took it up and set it again upon the altar, and then yet was it cast further than tofore and yet he took it up and remised it the third time upon the altar; and it was thrown again further than tofore. Of which thing all they that were there marvelled, and

men came for to see this thing. And anon, the child that had fallen in the sea, came again prestly before them all, and brought in his hands the first cup, and recounted to the people that, anon as he was fallen in the sea, the blessed S. Nicholas came and kept him that he had none harm. And thus his father was glad and offered to S. Nicholas both the two cups. **The Life of S. Nicholas**

There was another rich man that by the merits of S. Nicholas had a son, and called him: Deus dedit, God gave. And this rich man did do make a chapel of S. Nicholas in his dwelling-place; and did do hallow every year the feast of S. Nicholas. And this manor was set by the land of the Agarians. This child was taken prisoner, and deputed to serve the king. The year following, and the day that his father held devoutly the feast of S. Nicholas, the child held a precious cup tofore the king, and remembered his prise, the sorrow of his friends, and the joy that was made that day in the house of his father, and began for to sigh sore high. And the king demanded him what ailed him and the cause of his sighing; and he told him every word wholly. And when the king knew it he said to him: Whatsomever thy Nicholas do or do not, thou shalt abide here with us. And suddenly there blew a much strong wind, that made all the house to tremble, and the child was ravished with the cup, and was set tofore the gate where his father held the solemnity of S. Nicholas, in such wise that they all demeaned great joy.

And some say that this child was of Normandy, and went oversea, and was taken by the sowdan, which made him oft to be beaten tofore him. And as he was beaten on a S. Nicholas day, and was after set in prison, he prayed to S. Nicholas

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as well for his beating that he suffered, as for the great joy that he was wont to have on that day of S. Nicholas. And when he had long prayed and sighed he fell asleep, and when he awoke he found himself in the chapel of his father, whereas was much joy made for him. Let us then pray to this blessed saint that he will pray for us to our Lord Jesu Christ which is blessed in secula seculorum. Amen.

Here followeth the Conception of our Blessed Lady. Of the feast of the Conception of our Blessed Lady. Maria invenisti graciam apud Dominum. Lucæ primo capitulo.

When the angel Gabriel had greeted our Lady for to show to her the blessed conception of our Lord, for to take from her all doubts and dreads, he comforted her in saying the words aforesaid: Mary, thou hast found grace at the Lord. There be four manners of people, of which the two be good, and the two be evil. For some there be that seek not God nor his grace, as people out of the belief, of whom may be said as it is written: Who that believeth not on his Lord God shall die perpetually. And other there be that seek God and his grace, but they find it not, for they seek it not as they ought to do, as covetous men that set all their love in havoir and in solace of the world. Such people be likened to them that seek flowers in winter: well seek they flowers in winter that seek God and his grace in the covetise of the world, which is so cold of all virtues that it quencheth all the devotion of the love of God. And well is called the world winter in holy

scripture; for its evils and vices make men sinners and cold to serve God. And therefore saith the Holy Ghost to the soul that is amorous, Canticorum cap. ii.: Arise up thou my fair soul, the winter is past. Jam enim hiems transiit. For thou hast vanquished the temptations of the world which kele my love, and therefore come into my realm where thou shalt find deduite of all flowers of the summer, thereas the sinners may not come, because they seek not God as they ought to do by very repentance of heart. And therefore saith our Lord, Johannis cap. vii. Quæretis me et non invenietis. Item Johannis cap viii. Et quæretis me et in peccato vestro moriemini. Ye seek me and find me not. Item: So ye seek me and in sin shall ye die. The third manner of people that seek not God, and yet nevertheless they find him; they be children that die in their innocency and be purged by baptism. Of whom God said by his prophet Isaiah, cap. lxv. Invenerunt qui non quæsierunt me. I am found of them that sought me not; and that is for default of age. The fourth manner of people that seek God and find him, be they that set all their desire to serve God and love him, like as the blessed Virgin Mary, that sith she was in her infancy, she put her ever in the service of God and love of him, and vowed to him chastity, afore all other women. And therefore with right, might the angel well say to her: Maria, invenisti graciam apud dominum: Mary, thou hast found grace at God our Lord. We find in the scripture that this glorious Virgin Mary hath found grace in three manners; for her coming was long afore prophesied, and her birth annunciat and showed by the angel; and in the womb of her mother ere she was born, sanctified

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and hallowed. First her coming was showed and prophesied in many manners, and by many figures, for Balaam prophesied, Numeri cap. xxiv Orietur stella ex Jacob, et consurget virga de Israel. That is to say, that the Virgin Mary shall be born of the lineage of Jacob patriarch. It is a custom that when folk will praise a person, they will compare him to a valiant man, like as it is said commonly of a hardy man: This is a right Alexander; and of a simple man: This is a right Job. Thus Balaam the prophet compared our Lady to a star for three causes. First for that she is adorned and giveth beauty to all human creatures like as the star doth on the firmament, for she hath opened to us the gate of paradise; like as it is sung in holy church: Paradisi porta per Evam cunctis clausa est, et per beatam Virginem Mariam iterum patefacta est: The gate of paradise, which by Eve was closed from all men, is now opened by the blessed Virgin Mary. Secondly, like as the star enlumineth the night by his clearness, in like wise the glorious lady enlumineth by her life all holy church. Whereof holy church singeth: Cujus vita gloriosa lucem dedit seculo; the noble life of our Lady giveth light to all churches. For as saith Hugo de Sancto Victore: O glorious Lady, forasmuch as thou hast engendered a grace and glory to all manner of people, unto the dead life, to sinners grace, and to caitiffs pardon, may be said as is said Judith, cap. xv., Tu gloria Jerusalem, tu lætitia Israel, tu honorificentia, etc.: Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art all the honour of our people. Cap. eodem: Confortatum est cor tuum, eo quod castitatem amaveris, et post virum tuum, alterum nescieris: ideo et manus Domini confortavit te, et

ideo eris benedicta in æternum: Thou hast kept chastity, and therefore thou shalt be blessed permanably. Judith viii. Ora pro nobis, quoniam mulier sancta es, etc. Item cap. xiv. Benedicta es, etc. It was said to Judith the widow, this that we may say to our Lady: Pray for us for ye be an holy woman, ye be a daughter that is blessed of the sovereign God above all the women that be on the earth. Thirdly, she is compared to the star, for she hath dwelled all her life stedfastly in all works of virtue, without doing any sin, like as the star holdeth him on the firmament without descending to the earth. For as S. Bernard saith: If it were demanded to all the saints that ever have been: have ye been without sin? Except the glorious Virgin Mary, they might answer this that is written Johannis, cap. i. Si dixerimus quoniam non peccavimus, etc.: If we say that we have do no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us.

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This glorious virgin was, in the womb of her mother sanctified more plainly and more specially than ever was any other, for as saith S. Thomas Aquinas in Compendio: There be three manners of sanctifications, the first is common, and given by the sacraments of the holy church, like as by baptism and other sacraments, and these give grace but to take away the inclination to sin deadly and venially, nay, and this was done in the Virgin Mary, for she was hallowed and confirmed in all goodness, more than ever was any creature, like as saith S. Austin: She did never sin mortal nor venial. For she was so much enlumined by the Holy Ghost which descended in her, that through the conception of her blessed son Jesu Christ, which rested in her nine months, she

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was so confirmed in all virtues that there abode in her no inclination of sin. And therefore the holy church doth her more reverence and honour in ordaining to hallow the feast of her conception, because this feast is common to the knowledge of holy church by some miracles, like as we find reading in this manner:

Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury and pastor of England, sendeth greeting and benediction in our Lord perpetual unto the bishops that be under me, and to all them that have remembrance of the blessed Virgin Mary mother of God.

Right dear brethren, how the conception of the glorious Virgin Mary hath been showed sometime in England, in France, and in other countries by miracles, I shall rehearse to you.

In the time that it pleased to God for to correct the people of England of their evils and sins, and to constrain them to his service, he gave victory in battle to William, the glorious Duke of Normandy, to win and conquer the realm of England. And after that he was king of the land, anon by the help of God, and of his prudence, he reformed the estates and dignities of holy church into better reformation than it had been. To which the devil, enemy unto all good works had envy, and pained him to empesh and let the good works, as well by falseness of his servants as by encumbering of his strangers. For when the Danes heard say that England was subject unto the Normans, anon they made them ready to withstand it. When king William understood this, anon he sent the Abbot of Rumsey, which was named Helsinus, into Denmark for to know the truth. This Abbot after that he had done well and diligently the charge of his commission, and that he was returned

a great part of the sea homeward, anon arose a great tempest on the sea, in such wise that the cords and other habiliments of the ship brake. And the masters and governors of the ship, and all they that were therein, lost the hope and trust to escape the peril of this tempest, and all cried devoutly to the glorious Virgin Mary, which is comfort to the discomforted, and hope to the despaired, and recommended themselves in the keeping of God. And anon they saw coming tofore the ship, upon the water, an honourable person in habit of a bishop, which called the said abbot in the ship, and said to him: Wilt thou escape these perils of the sea, and go home whole and safe into thy country? And the abbot answered, weeping, that he desired that above all other things. Then said the angel to him: Know thou that I am sent hither by our Lady for to say to thee that if thou wilt hear me and do thereafter, thou shalt escape this peril of the sea. The abbot promised that gladly he would obey to that he should say. Then said the angel: Make covenant to God, and to me, that thou shalt do hallow the feast of the Conception of our Lady, and of her creation, well and solemnly, and that thou shalt go and preach it. And the abbot demanded in what time this feast should be kept. The angel answered to him, The eighth day of December. And the abbot demanded him what office and service he should take for the service in holy church. And the angel answered: All the office of the nativity of our Lady, save where thou sayest nativity, thou shalt say, conception, and anon after the angel vanished away and the tempest ceased. And the abbot came home safely into his country with his company, and notified to all them that he

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might, that he had heard and seen. And, right dear sirs, if ye will arrive at the port of health, let us hallow devoutly the creation and the conception of the mother of our Lord, by whom we may receive the reward of her son in the glory of paradise celestial.

It is also otherwise declared: In the time of Charlemagne, king of France, there was a clerk which was brother germain to the king of Hungary, which loved heartily the blessed Virgin Mary and was wont to say every day matins of her, and the Hours. It happed that by counsel of his friends he took in marriage a much fair damsel, and when he had wedded her, and the priest had given the benediction on them after the mass, anon he remembered that that day he had not said his Hours of our Lady, wherefore he sent home the bride, his wife, and the people, to his house, and he abode in the church beside an altar for to say his Hours; and when he came to this anthem: Pulchra es et decora filia Jerusalem; that is to say: Thou art fair and gracious, daughter of Jerusalem, anon appeared tofore him the glorious Virgin Mary with two angels on either side, and said to him: I am fair and gracious, wherefore leavest thou me and takest thou another wife? or where hast thou seen one more fair than I am? And the clerk answered: Madam, thy beauty surmounteth all the beauty of the world, thou art lift up above the heavens and above the angels; what wilt thou that I do? And she answered and said: If thou wilt leave thy wife fleshly, thou shalt have me thine espouse in the realm of heaven, and if thou wilt hallow the feast of my conception, the eighth day of December, and preach it about that it may be hallowed, thou shalt be crowned in the realm of heaven. And anon therewith our Blessed Lady vanished away.

Let us then pray to that glorious virgin our Lady Saint Mary, that we after this short and transitory life may be crowned in heaven in glory celestial, to which God bring us. Amen.

The Lives of Saints Gentian, Fulcian, and Victorice

The Lives of the Saints Gentian, Fulcian and Victorice.

Saints Fulcian and Victorice, of whom the solemnity is hallowed, came from the city of Rome for to preach the faith of Jesu Christ into these parts, and were in the city of Therouanne and preached there the faith. And they repaired by Amiens, and passed by a little village named Gains, and found there a good man that believed in God, but he was not yet baptized, and was named Gentian. And he saluted them and said: Sirs, ye be welcome, and they said: God save you. And after, he demanded them: What seek ye? And they answered: We seek one of our fellows called Quintin, and he said: Ah! fair sirs, he was but late beheaded not long sith, and sentence was given that, where such manner people might be found that preached of God, that they should be slain, but come ye near, and eat ye a morsel of bread. And as they were there, a tyrant that was called Rictius Varus came with servants, and said to Gentian: Deliver to us them that be herein, and he said: I shall not do it. Then he drew out his sword all naked. Gentian said: They take none heed of you. The tyrant Rictius Varus had great anger and sorrow, and made to take Gentian, and smote off his head. And after, he made to be taken S. Fulcian and S. Victorice, and brought them to Amiens, and

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said to them that they should forsake their God, whom they had made die an evil death, and they said they would not. Then he did do take broches of iron and put them through their ears and through their nostrils, and after did do smite off their heads. And, by the will and power of our Lord, they arose up, and took their heads in their hands, and bare them two miles far from the place where they had been beheaded. And all three were buried together in that town which is called Saint Fulcien. A great rage and madness took the tyrant Rictius Varus, and he cried through the city of Amiens, all enraged: Alas! alas! alas! now be well the Saints avenged on me, and sith died foul in his woodness. And thus were the friends of our Lord avenged on the tyrant, and by such martyrdom the glorious saints departed out of this life unto the realm of heaven. Then pray we unto the glorious martyrs S. Fulcian, S. Victorice, and S. Gentian, that they will pray God for us, that by their merits we may have pardon and forgiveness of our sins. Amen.

Here followeth the Life of the Blessed Virgin Lucy.

Lucy is said of light, and light is beauty in beholding, after that S. Ambrose saith: The nature of light is such, she is gracious in beholding, she spreadeth over all without lying down, she passeth in going right without crooking by right long line; and it is without dilation of tarrying, and therefore it is showed the blessed Lucy hath beauty of virginity without any corruption; essence of charity without disordinate love; rightful going and devotion to God, without squaring out of the

way; right long line by continual work without negligence of slothful tarrying. In Lucy is said, the way of light. The Life of S. Lucy

S. Lucy, the holy virgin, was born in Sicily, and extract and engendered of a noble lineage, in the city of Syracuse. When she heard of the good fame and renown of S. Agatha or Agaas, which was published and spread all about, anon she went to her sepulchre with her mother which was named Euthicia, which had a malady, named the bloody flux, by the space of four years, the which no master in physic ne surgery could heal. And when they were at a mass, one read a gospel which made mention of a woman which was healed of the bloody flux by touching of the hem of the coat of Jesu Christ. When S. Lucy heard this, anon she said to her mother: Mother, if ye believe that this which is read be true, and also that S. Agatha hath now presently with her Jesu Christ, and also that for his name she suffered martyrdom, and if ye, with this belief, touch her sepulchre, without doubt ye shall be anon guerished and healed. Upon this they, after the mass, when the people were departed, they twain fell down on their knees on the sepulchre of S. Agatha in prayers, and weeping began to pray for her help and aid. S. Lucy in making her prayers for her mother fell asleep, and she saw in her sleep S. Agatha among the angels, nobly adorned and arrayed with precious stones, which said thus to her: Lucy, my sweet sister, devout virgin to God, wherefore prayest thou to me for thy mother, for such thing as thou mayest thyself right soon give to her? For I tell thee for truth, that for thy faith, and thy good, thy mother is safe and whole. With these words S. Lucy awoke all afraid, and said to her mother:

The Life of S. Lucy

Mother, ye be guerished and all whole; I pray you for her sake by whose prayers ye be healed, that ye never make mention to me for to take an husband ne spouse, but all that good that ye would give me with a man, I pray you that ye will give it to me for to do alms withal that I may come to my saviour Jesu Christ. Her mother answered to her: Fair daughter, thy patrimony, which I have received this nine years, sith thy father died, I have nothing aminished, but I have multiplied and increased it; but abide till I am departed out of this world, and then forthon do as it shall please thee. S. Lucy said: Sweet mother, hear my counsel: he is not beloved of God, that for his love giveth that which he may not use himself, but if thou wilt find God debonair to thee, give for him that which thou mayest dispend, for after thy death thou mayest in no wise use thy goods. That which thou givest when thou shalt die, thou givest it because thou mayest not bear it with thee. Give then for God's sake whiles thou livest: and as to such good as thou oughtest to give to me with an husband or spouse, begin to give all that to your people for the love of Jesu Christ. Hereof spake alway Lucy to her mother, and every day they gave alms of their goods. And when they had almost sold their patrimony and their jewels, tidings came to the knowledge of her spouse that should have wedded her, and that she was promised to, the which he demanded hereof the truth of the nurse of S. Lucy, and wherefore they sold thus their patrimony. She answered cautelously, and said that they did it because that S. Lucy, which should have been his wife, had found one which had a more fairer and nobler heritage than his was, the which they would buy tofore ere they should

assemble by marriage. The fool believed it, for he understood carnally this that the nurse had said to him spiritually, and helped them to sell their heritage. But when he understood that she gave all for God's love, and that he felt himself deceived, anon he complained on Lucy, and made her to come tofore a judge named Paschasius, which was a miscreant and heathen man. And it was because she was christian, and that she did against the law of the Emperor, Paschasius blamed her, and admonested her to worship and do sacrifice to the idols. She said: Sacrifice which pleaseth God is to visit the widows and orphans, and to help them in their need: I have not ceased these three years past to make to God such sacrifice, and forasmuch as I have no more of which I may make yet such sacrifice, I offer to him myself, let him do with his offering as it pleaseth him. Paschasius said: Thou mightest say these words unto christian people, semblable to thee, but to me which keep the commandments of the emperors, thou sayest them in vain. S. Lucy said: If thou wilt keep the law of thy lords, I shall keep the law of God; thou doubtest to anger them, and I shall keep me that I anger not my God; thou wilt please them, and I covet only to please our Lord Jesu Christ. Paschasius said: Thou hast dispended thy patrimony with the ribalds, and therefore thou speakest as a ribald. She said. I have set my patrimony in a sure place; unto the corruption of my heart ne body, I never agreed ne suffered it. Paschasius said: Who be they that corrupt the heart and the body? She said: Ye be that corrupt the hearts, of whom the apostle said: The evil words corrupt the good manners. Ye counsel the souls to forsake their creator and to ensue the devil in making sacrifice to the idols;

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the corrupters of the body be they that love the short delectations corporal, and despite delights spiritual that endure for ever. Paschasius said: These words that thou sayest shall finish when thou shalt come to thy pains. She said: The words of God may not end ne finish. Paschasius said: How then! art thou God? She said: I am the handmaid of God, and for so much as I say, they be the words of God, for he saith: Ye be not they that speak tofore the princes and judges, but the Holy Ghost speaketh in you. Paschasius said: And therefore the Holy Ghost is in thee? She said: The apostle saith that they be the temple of God that live chastely, and the Holy Ghost dwelleth in them. Paschasius said: I shall do bring thee to the bordel, where thou shalt lose thy chastity, and then the Holy Ghost shall depart from thee. She said: The body may take no corruption but if the heart and will give thereto assenting: for if thou madest me to do sacrifice by my hands, by force, to the idols, against my will, God shall take it only but as a derision, for he judgeth only of the will and consenting. And therefore, if thou make my body to be defouled without mine assent, and against my will, my chastity shall increase double to the merit of the crown of glory. What thing that thou dost to the body, which is in thy power, that beareth no prejudice to the handmaid of Jesu Christ. Then commanded Paschasius that the ribalds of the town should come, to whom he delivered S. Lucy, saying: Call other to you for to defoul her, and labour her so much till she be dead. Anon the ribalds would have drawn her from thence where she was, and have brought her to the bordel, but the Holy Ghost made her so pesant and heavy

that in no wise might they move her from the place. Wherefore many of the servants of the judge put hand to, for to draw with the other, and she abode still. Then they bound cords to her hands and feet, and all drew, but she abode alway still as a mountain, without moving. Whereof Paschasius was all anguishous and angry, and did do call his enchanters, which might never move her for all enchantery. Then Paschasius did do yoke for her oxen many, for to draw her, and yet they might not move her from the place. Then Paschasius demanded her for what reason might it be that a frail maid might not be drawn ne moved by a thousand men. She said: It is the work of God, and if thou settest thereto yet ten thousand they should not move me. Of these words the judge was sore tormented. And S. Lucy said to him: Wherefore tormentest thou thyself thus? If thou hast proved and assayed that I am the temple of God, believe it. If thou hast not assayed, learn to assay. And hereof was the judge more tormented, for he saw that she made but her mockery with him. Wherefore he did do make about S. Lucy a right great fire, and made to be cast on her pitch, resin, and boiling oil, and she abode all still tofore the fire, and said: I have prayed to Jesu Christ that this fire have no domination in me to the end that the christian men that believe in God make of thee their derision. And I have prayed for respite of my martyrdom for to take away from the christian men the fear and dread to die for the faith of Jesu Christ, and to take away from the miscreants the avaunting of my martyrdom. The friends of the judge saw that he was confused by the words of S. Lucy, and of the drawing much greatly tormented, and therefore they roof a sword

The Life of S. Nicasius

through her throat, and yet for all that she died not anon, but spake to the people, saying: I announce and show to you that holy church shall have peace, for Diocletian the emperor, which was enemy to holy church is this day put out of his seignory, and Maximian, his fellow, is this day dead. And in likewise as S. Agatha is patroness and keeper of Catania, in the same wise shall I be committed to be patroness of Syracuse, this city. And as she spake thus to the people, the sergeants and ministers of Rome came for to take Paschasius and bring him to Rome, because he was accused tofore the senators of Rome of that he had robbed the province; wherefore he received his sentence of the senate, and had his head smitten off. S. Lucy never removed from the place where she was hurt with the sword, ne died not till the priest came and brought the blessed body of our Lord Jesu Christ. And as soon as she had received the blessed sacrament she rendered and gave up her soul to God, thanking and praising him of all his goodness. In that same place is a church edified in the name of her, whereas many benefits have been given to the honour of our Lord Jesu Christ, which is blessed world without end. Amen.

Here followeth the Life of S. Nicasius.

In that time that the Vandals wasted and destroyed many cities and lands, they came to the city of Rheims in France, in which city S. Nicasius was archbishop. He preached the faith of Jesu Christ and comforted the people, and admonished them to receive in patience the persecution of the Vandals, which had then destroyed the country and land all about the city. And as this people

called Vandals approached the city, the folk came to the archbishop and demanded counsel if they should yield them or go and fight for the city. S. Nicasius, to whom God had showed tofore that the Vandals came, that all the city should be destroyed, impetered and had grant of our Lord that this tribulation and this death should be to the health of the souls of them that to their power should be repentant of their sins, and sith said to them: Let us go surely to the peril of death, and let us abide the mercy of God. I am ready to set my soul for my people; let us pray for our enemies, and let us desire of their souls like as of our own. Thus as he spake to the people, S. Eutropia, his sister, exhorted as much as she might the people to receive martyrdom, which was ready. **The Life of S. Nicasius**

After the orisons and the enseignments that they had made to the people, they issued out against the Vandals, and S. Nicasius said to them: If ye will slay my people, slay me first tofore. And after he preached to them the faith of Jesu Christ, and taught them how they might be saved; but they would not understand it. Then the holy man set him to prayer, and while he prayed his enemies smote off his head. And after that the head was smitten off he made an end of his prayer, and said in his tongue this verse of the psalter: Adhesit pavimento, etc. When S. Eutropia saw her brother martyred, and saw that no man made her ready to be martyred, but strove for her beauty, she ran to him that had slain her brother, and would have scratched his eyes out of his head; and anon she was martyred and many others with her. Then the Vandals saw a great company of chivalry of heaven come for to avenge the great felony that they had done, and heard a great sound in the

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church; and they had so great fear and dread that they left all their armours and fled. And there appeared a great light and clearness upon the bodies, that it was seen far by night.

Then came again some burgesses of them that had fled, and saw the clearness, and felt a great odour about the martyrs, and buried them about the city, and thanked our Lord and served him more perfectly than they had done tofore. Let us pray then to the holy S. Nicasius and to S. Eutropia that they will get us grace of our Lord and that they bring us into their company. Amen.

Here beginneth the Life of S. Thomas the Apostle.

Thomas is as much to say as abysm or double, which in Greek is said didimus; or else Thomas is said of Thomos, which is said division or parting. He was abysm or swallow because he deserved to pierce the deepness of divinity, when at his interrogation Jesu Christ answered to him: Ego sum via, veritas et vita: I am the way, truth, and life. He is said double because he knew Christ in his resurrection in double wise more than other knew, for they knew him but only in seeing, but Thomas knew him both seeing and feeling. He is said division or departing, for he departed his love from the love of the world, and was departed from the other apostles at the resurrection. Or Thomas is said as, appeared again, that is in the love of God by contemplation. He had there things in him of which Prosper saith in the book of the Soul Contemplative, and demandeth what it is for to love nothing but to conceive the burning of him in his thought, and the talent of God, and the hate of sin, and to forsake the world. Or

Thomas is as much to say as alway going in the love and contemplation of God. Or Thomas is as much as: My God, because he said, when he touched the side of our Lord: My God and my Lord. **The Life of S. Thomas the Apostle**

S. Thomas, when he was in Cæsarea, our Lord appeared to him, and said: The King of India, Gundoferus, hath sent his provost, Abbanes, for to seek men that can well the craft of masons, and I shall send thee to him. And S. Thomas said: Sir, send me over all save to them of India. And our Lord said to him: Go thy way thither surely, for I shall be thy keeper, and when thou hast converted them of India, thou shalt come to me by the crown of martyrdom. And Thomas said to him: Thou art my lord, and I thy servant; thy will be fulfilled. And as the provost went through the market, our Lord said to him: Young man, what wilt thou buy? and he said: My lord hath sent me for to bring to him some that be learned in the science of masonry, that they might make for him a palace after the work of Rome. And then our Lord delivered to him S. Thomas the Apostle, and told to him that he was much expert in that work. And they departed and sailed till they came in a city, where the king made a wedding of his daughter, and had do cry that all the people should come to this feast of this marriage or else he would be angry. And it so happed that the provost and Thomas went thither, and an Hebrew maid had a pipe in her hand and praised ever each one with some laud or praising. And when she saw the apostle she knew that he was an Hebrew because he ate not, but had alway his eyes firm toward heaven. And as the maid sang tofore him in Hebrew, she said: The God

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of heaven is one only God, the which created all things and founded the seas. And the apostle made her to say these words again. And the butler beheld him, and saw that Thomas ate not ne drank not, but alway looked upward to heaven. And he came to the apostle and smote him on the cheek; and the apostle said to him, that in time to come it be pardoned to thee, and that now a wound transitory be given to thee, and said: I shall not arise from this place till the hand that hath smitten me be eaten with dogs. And anon after, the butler went for to fetch water at a well, and there a lion came and slew him and drank his blood, and the hounds drew his body into pieces, in such wise that a black dog brought the right arm into the hall in the middle of the dinner. And when they saw this, all the company was abashed, and the maid remembered the words, and threw down her pipe or flute, and fell down at the feet of the apostle. And this vengeance blameth S. Austin in his book of Faustius, and saith that this was set in of some false prophets, for this thing might be suspicious unto many things. Whether it be true or no it appertaineth not to me, but I wot well that they should be like as our Lord teacheth, which saith: If any man smiteth thee on that one cheek, show and offer to him that other, and certainly the apostle held within his courage the will of God and of dilection, and without forth he required example of correction. This saith S. Austin. And then, at the request of the king, the apostle blessed them that were new married, and said: Lord God give to these children the blessing of thy right hand, and set in their minds the seed of life. And when the apostle was gone, there was found, in the hand of the young man that was

married, a branch of palm full of dates; and when he and his wife had eaten of the fruit they fell asleep, and they had one semblable dream. For them seemed that a king adorned with precious stones embraced them, and said: Mine apostle hath blessed you in such wise that ye shall be partakers of the glory perdurable. Then they awoke, and told to each other their dream. And then the apostle came to them and said: My king hath appeared right now to you, and hath brought me hither, the doors being shut, so that my blessing may be fruitful upon you, and that ye may have the sureness of your flesh, the which is queen of all virtues and fruit of perpetual health, and above the angels' possessions of all good, victory of lechery, lord of the faith, discomfiture of devils, and surety of joys perdurable. Lechery is engendered of corruption, and of corruption cometh pollution, and of pollution cometh sin, and of sin is confusion engendered.

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And he thus saying, two angels appeared to them and said: We be the two angels deputed for to keep you, and if ye keep well all the admonestments of the apostle we shall offer to God all your desires. And then the apostle baptized them, and informed them diligently in the faith. And long time after the wife, named Pelagia, was sacred with a veil, and suffered martyrdom, and the husband named Denis was sacred bishop of that city. And after this, the apostle and Abbanes came unto the King of India, and the king devised to the apostle a marvellous palace, and delivered to him great treasure. And the king went into another province, and the apostle gave all the treasure to poor people, and the apostle was alway in predications two years or thereabout ere the

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king came, and converted much people without number to the faith. And when the king came and knew what he had done, he put him and Abbanes in the most deepest of his prisons, and purposed fully to slay them and burn. And in the meanwhile Gad, brother of the king, died, and there was made for him a rich sepulchre, and the fourth day he that had been dead arose from death to life, and all men were abashed and fled. And he said to his brother: This man that thou intendest to slay and burn is the friend of God, and the angels of God serve him, and they brought me in to paradise, and have showed me a palace of gold and silver and of precious stones, and it is marvellously ordained. And when I marvelled of the great beauty thereof, they said to me: This is the palace that Thomas hath made for thy brother. And when I said that I would be thereof porter, they said to me: Thy brother is made unworthy to have it; if thou wilt dwell therein, we shall pray God to raise thee so that thou mayst go buy it of thy brother, in giving to him the money that he supposed he had lost. And when he had said this he ran to the prison and required of the apostle that he would pardon his brother that he had done to him, and then delivered him out of prison, and prayed the apostle that he would take and do on him a precious vesture. And the apostle said to him: Knowest thou not that they which ween to have power in things celestial set nought in nothing fleshly ne earthly? And when the apostle issued out of prison, the king came against him and fell down at his feet, and required of him pardon. Then the apostle said to him: God hath given to you much great grace when he hath showed to you his secrets;

now believe in Jesu Christ and be ye baptized, to the end that thou be prince in the realm perdurable. And then the brother of the king said: I have seen the palace that thou hast do make to my brother, and I am come for to buy it. And the apostle said to him: If it be the will of thy brother it shall be done. And the king said: Sith it pleaseth God, this shall be mine, and the apostle shall make to thee another; and if peradventure he may not, this same shall be common to thee and to me. And the apostle answered and said: Many palaces be there in heaven which be made ready sith the beginning of the world, that be bought by price of the faith and by alms of your riches, which may well go tofore you to these palaces, but they may not follow you. **The Life of S. Thomas the Apostle**

And after this, at the end of a month, the apostle made to assemble all them of the province, and when they were assembled he commanded that the feeble and sick should be set apart by themselves. Then he prayed for them, and they that were well enseigned and taught said Amen. And forthwith came a clear light from heaven which descended upon them, and smote down all the people and the apostle to the earth; and they supposed they had been smitten with thunder, and so lay by the space of half an hour. After, the apostle rose and said: Arise ye up for my lord is come as thunder, and hath healed us; and anon they arose all whole and glorified God and the apostle. Then began the apostle to teach them, and to show to them the degrees of virtue. The first is that they should believe in God which is one essence, and treble or three in persons, and showed to them examples sensible, how three persons be in one essence. The first example in

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a man is wisdom, and thereof cometh understanding, memory, and cunning. Cunning is of that thou hast learned the memory or mind, and retainest that thou shouldest forget. And the understanding is that thou understandest this that is taught to thee and showed. The second example is that, in a vine be three things, the stock, the leaf, and the fruit. The third example is that three things be in the head of a man, hearing, seeing, and tasting or smelling. The second degree that they receive baptism. The third, that they keep them from fornication. The fourth, that they keep them from avarice. The fifth, that they restrain them from gluttony. The sixth, that they keep their penance. The seventh, that they persevere and abide in these things. The eighth, that they love hospitality. The ninth, that in things to be done they require the will of God, and that they require such things by works. The tenth, that they eschew those things that be not for to be done. The eleventh, that they do charity to their enemies and to their friends. The twelfth, that they keep charity, and do work by diligence to keep these things. And after his predication, forty thousand men were baptized, without women and small children.

And incontinent he went into the great India where he shone by miracles innumerable, for he enlumined and made to see Syntice, the friend of Migdonia, which was wife of Carisius, cousin of the king of India. And Migdonia said to Syntice: Weenest thou that I may see him? Then Migdonia changed her habit by the counsel of Syntice, and put herself among the poor women, and came whereas the apostle preached. And he began to preach of the maleurte and unhappiness

of this life, and said that this life is unhappy, wretched and subject to adventures, and is so slippery and fleeting, that when one weeneth to hold it, it fleeth away. And after, he began to show to them by four reasons that they should gladly hear the word of God, and likeneth it to four manner of things: first, unto a colour which lighteth the eye of our understanding; secondly, to a syrup or a purgation, for the word of God purgeth our affection from all fleshly love; thirdly, unto an emplaister, because it healeth the wounds of our sins; and fourthly, unto meat, because the word of God nourisheth us, and delighteth in heavenly love. And in like manner, like as all these things avail not to the sick man but if he take and receive them, in like wise, the word of God profiteth nothing to a languishing sick man, if he hear it not devoutly. And as the apostle thus preached, Migdonia believed in God, and refused the bed of her husband. Then Carisius did so much that he made the apostle to be set in prison. And Migdonia went to him and asked him forgiveness, because he was set in prison for her sake. And he comforted her sweetly, and said he would suffer it debonairly. And then Carisius prayed the king that he would send the queen his wife's sister unto her, for to essay if she might turn her, and call her again from the christian faith. And the queen was sent thither, and when she saw her, and knew of so many miracles as the apostle did, she said: They be accursed of God that believe not in his works. Then the apostle taught them shortly that were there, four things; first, that they should love the church, honour and worship the priests, assemble them often in prayers, and often to hear the word

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of God. And when the king saw the queen, he said to her: Why hast thou abided there so long? And she then answered: I had supposed that Migdonia had been a fool, but she is right wise, for she hath brought me to the apostle, which hath made me to know the way of truth, and they be overmuch fools that believe not the way of truth, that is to say, that they believe in Jesu Christ. And never after would the queen lie with the king. And then the king was abashed, and said to his cousin: When I would have recovered thy wife I have lost mine, and my wife is worse to me than thine is to thee. Then the king commanded that the apostle should be brought tofore him, his hands and feet bound; and was commanded that he should reconcile the wives to their husbands. And then the apostle said to the king, in showing to him by three examples that, as long as he should be in the error of the faith they ought not to obey them. That is to wit, by the example of the king, by example of the tower, and by example of the fountain, and said to him: Thou that art king wilt have no services soiled ne foul, but thou hast cleanly servants and neat chamberers. And what weenest thou God loveth? Chastity and clean services. Am I then to blame if I preach to thee to love God and his servants whom he loveth? I have made them clean servants to him; I have founded a tower; and thou sayst to me that I should destroy it. Also I have dolven in the deep earth, and have brought forth a fountain out of the abysm, and thou sayst I should stop it. Then the king was angry, and commanded to bring forth pieces of iron burning, and made to set the apostle on them all naked, his feet bound. And anon by the will of our Lord, a fountain of water

sourded and sprang up, and quenched it all. And then the king, by the counsel of his cousin, made him to be set in a burning furnace, which was made so cold that the next day he issued out all safe, without harm. And then said Carisius to the king: Make him to offer sacrifice to one of the gods only, in such wise that he fall in the ire of his God that thus delivereth him. And as they constrained him thereto, he said: King, thou art nothing more noble, ne more mighty than be thy painters, and how despisest thou very God and worshippest a painting whom thou weenest to be thy God? Like as Carisius hath said to thee, that my God should be angry when that I worshipped thy god. And if he be angered, it should be more to thy god than to me, for when thou shouldest ween that I worshipped thy God, I should worship mine. And the king said: Why speakest thou to me such words? And then the apostle commanded in Hebrew the devil that was within the idol that, as soon as he kneeled tofore the idol, he should anon break it in pieces. And the apostle kneeled and said: Lo! see ye that I worship, but not the idol; I adore, but not the metal; I worship, but not the false image, but I honour and worship my Lord Jesu Christ in the name of whom I command thee, devil, which art hid within this image, that thou break this false idol. And anon he molt it as wax. And then the priests came lowing as beasts, and the bishop of the temple lift up a glaive and run the apostle through and said: I shall avenge the injury of my god. And the king and Carisius fled away, for they saw that the people would avenge the apostle and burn the bishop all quick. And the christian men bare away the body of the apostle and buried it worship-

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fully. Long time after, about the year of our Lord two hundred and thirty, the body of the apostle was borne into Edessa, the city which sometime was said Rages, city of Media; and Alexander the Emperor bare it thither at the request of the Syrians. And in this city no man might harbour Jew, ne paynim, ne tyrant, that should live. After this Abagar, king of this city, desired to have an epistle written with the hand of our Lord, for if any men moved war against this city, they took a christian child, and set him on the gate, and he should there read the epistle, and the same day, what for the virtue of the writing of our Saviour, as for the merits of the apostle, the enemies fled or else made peace.

Isidore, in the book of the Life of the Saints, saith thus of this apostle: Thomas, apostle and disciple of our Lord Jesu Christ, and like unto our Saviour, preached the Gospel unto miscreants, to them of Persia and of Media, to the Hircanians and Bactrians, and he entering into the parts of the orient, pierced through the entrails of the people. There demened his predication unto the title of his passion, and there was he pierced with a glaive and so died. And Chrysostom saith that when Thomas came in to the parts of the three kings which came to worship our Lord he baptized them, and they were made helpers and aiders of our Lord and of christian faith. Pray we then to this holy apostle, S. Thomas, that he will be moyen unto our Lord that we may have grace of him to amend us in this present life, that we may come into his everlasting bliss. Amen.

Here followeth the Life of S. Anastasia.

The Life of S. Anastasia

S. Anastasia was daughter to a gentleman of the Romans, but he was a paynim. Her mother, which was christian, was taught and informed in the faith by S. Chrysogony. The foresaid S. Anastasia was married unto a paynim named Publius, but she feigned her always to be sick, in such wise that she came not in his company. She went visiting the christian prisoners that were in diverse prisons, in poverty and foul clothing, and she administered to them such things as they needed, of her good. And therefore, her husband made her to be straitly kept, in such wise that she had nothing to eat, and so would slay her, and all because he would with her goods make his pride and jollities. Then the lady, that well supposed to have died, sent often letters to S. Chrysogony, and the holy saint recomforted her by his letters as well as he might. Now it happed in the mean while that her husband died; then she was delivered from prison. She had three damsels which were sisters that served her, whom she had informed and taught that they should not reny their faith, ne their good life, for any menaces ne threatenings that the provost should do. The provost on a day came to draw them to him, and S. Anastasia did do hide them in her kitchen. The provost went after for to accomplish his ribaldry, and they kneeled down and prayed their prayers in such wise that the provost lost his wits. And when he supposed to have taken, embraced and held them, he embraced pots, pans, and the cauldrons, and kissed them in such wise that he was so foul, horrible and black, that when he issued out, his meiny that awaited his coming, supposed

The Life of S. Anastasia

that he had been out of his wits; and they beat him well, and after fled from him from fear, and left him there alone. And he went for to complain him unto the emperor. And when he came to the gate, the sergeants that saw him so black and smutted, beat him well with rods and scratched him in the visage and held him for wood. And the caitiff knew not that he was so foul and black, and therefore he marvelled much more why they did to him so much shame where tofore they did to him so much honour. And he had supposed that he had been clad in a white robe. When they told him how he was arrayed, then he supposed the maidens had enchanted him, and sent for them, and would have despoiled them all naked tofore him, because he might see and behold them and ease him of his lechery, but their clothes were anon so fast glued to their bodies, that in no wise they might be taken off ne despoiled. And then he fell asleep and routed so fast that no man might awake him. At the last these three virgins were martyred and suffered death, and S. Anastasia was given unto another man, a provost, upon this condition, that if he might make her sacrifice unto the idols he should have her to his wife. And when she was brought into his chamber, and he would have embraced her, he became blind, and sith made his pilgrimage to his gods to know if he might be healed thereof, and they said to him: Because that thou hast angered S. Anastasia, thou art given to torments and shalt be alway with us. And when he returned and was come home unto his house, he died suddenly among the hands of the sergeants. Then the emperor delivered S. Anastasia to another provost. He came to the saint and said to her: I wot well that thou art christian, and if thou wilt do as thy

God saith I shall let thee go and do what thou wilt, for thy God saith: But if one renounce all that he hath, he may not be my disciple; then renounce and give to me all that thou hast, and go thy way. S. Anastasia answered: Jesu Christ saith that we should give unto the poor and not to the rich, then if I gave to thee, I should do against the commandment of God. Then the provost did do set her in prison, and defended that any man should give to her any meat. Then God sent to her substance of meat from heaven two months during. After that she was sent in exile with two hundred virgins in to an isle whereas many christians were exiled. After that it was not long time that the provost remanded and sent again for S. Anastasia, and did do burn her the year of the incarnation of our Lord two hundred and four score, and made the others to die by divers torments; among whom there was one from whom was taken much good, and alway she said: At the last ye may not take from me Jesu Christ. Apollonia, which was a christian woman, toke the body of S. Anastasia, and buried it in her garden, and there did do make a fair church. Let us pray then unto Almighty God, that by the prayers and merits of S. Anastasia we may come unto his everlasting bliss. Amen.

The Life of S. Eugene

Here beginneth the Life of S. Eugenia.

Eugenia, the noble virgin, which was daughter to Philip, duke of Alexandria, which for the emperor of Rome governed all the land of Egypt. Eugenia issued privily out of her father's palace with two servants, and she went into an abbey in

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the habit and array of a man, in which abbey she led so holy a life that at the last she was made abbot of the same. It happed so that no man knew that she was a woman, yet there was a lady accused her of adultery tofore the judge which was her own father. Eugenia was put in prison for to be judged to death. At the last she said to her father much thing for to draw him to the faith of Jesu Christ. She rent her coat and showed to him that she was a woman and daughter of him that held her in prison, and so she converted her father unto the christian faith. And he was after an holy bishop, and at the hour that he sang his mass he was beheaded for the faith of Jesu Christ; and the lady that had falsely accused Eugenia was burnt with fire of hell with all her party. And after that, Claudia and her children came to Rome, and much people were by them converted, and many virgins by Eugenia, which Eugenia was much tormented in divers manners, and at the last by the sword accomplished her martyrdom, and thus made the offering of her proper body to our Lord Jesu Christ, qui est benedictus in secula seculorum. Amen.

Here followeth the Life of S. Stephen Protomartyr.

Stephen is as much to say in Greek as crowned, and in Hebrew example to other for to suffer. Or Stephen is as much to say as nobly and truly speaking, teaching and governing, or as a friend of the widow women; and he was deputed of the apostles to keep the widows. Then he was crowned, for he began first to be a martyr, example for the ensample of his patience and

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good life, nobly speaking for right noble predication, and well governing for the good enseignments and teaching of widows.

S. Stephen was one of the seven deacons in the ministry of the apostles. For when the number grew of people converted, some began to murmur against the Jews that were converted because that the widows and wives of them were refused to serve or because they were more grieved every day than the other in service. For the apostles did this because they should be more ready to preach the word of God. When the apostles saw their great murmur, they assembled them all together, and said: It is not right that we leave the word of God for to administer and serve at the tables, and the gloss saith that the feeding of the soul is better than the meat of the body. And consider ye fair brethren, men of good renown among you, that be replenished of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, what we shall establish upon this work so that they administer and serve, and we shall be in prayer and preaching. And this word pleased to them all, and they chose seven men, of whom the blessed Stephen was the first and the master, and sith he brought them to the apostles, and they set their hands upon them, and ordained them. And Stephen, full of grace and strength made great demonstrances and great signs to the people. Then the Jews took him and would surmount him in disputing, and assailed him for to overcome him in three manners, that was by bringing witnesses, by disputations, and by torments. And in every each one of them was aid and help given to him from heaven. In the first, the Holy Ghost administered his words, in the second, the angelic face that feared the false witnesses. In

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the third, he saw Jesu Christ ready to help him, which comforted him to his martyrdom. In every battle he had three things; the assault in battle, the aid given, and the victory. And in advising and beholding shortly the history, we may well see all these things. As the blessed Stephen did many things, and preached oft to the people, the Jews made the first battle to him for to overcome him by disputations. And some arose of the synagogue called libertines, of a religion so named of them that were the sons of them that had been in bondage and were made free, and thus they that first repugned against the faith were of a bond and thrall lineage, and also they of Cyrenia and Alexandria, and of them that were of Cilicia and Asia, all these disputed with Stephen. This was the first battle, and then he putteth the victory after, and they might not resist his wisdom, for the Holy Ghost spake in him: and when they saw that by this manner they might not overcome him they returned maliciously. And at the second time because they might overcome by false witnesses, they brought two false witnesses for to accuse him of four blames, and brought him to the judgment. And then the false men accused him of four things, that was of blaspheming of God in the law of Moses, in the tabernacle, and in the temple, and this was the second battle. And then all they that were in judgment saw the face of S. Stephen like as the face of an angel: and this was by the help of God, and this was the victory of the second battle. For when the false witnesses had all said, the prince of the priests said to him: What sayst thou? Then Stephen excused him by order of all that which the false witnesses had said. And first of the blaspheming of God,

saying: God that spake to our fathers and prophets, that is God of glory, and praised him in three things after this word glory, which is expounded right sweetly. The God of glory is given of glory, as it is said in the book of Kings: Whosoever shall see my name, I shall glorify him. The God of glory may be said, containing glory, as is said in the Proverbs, the eighth chapter: Riches and glory be with me, the God of glory, to whom glory is due. And thus praised he God in three manners; in that he is glorious, glorifying, and to be glorified. And after he excused him of the blame in Moses, in praising him much, and especially in three things, that is to wit: of fervour of love, for he slew the Egyptian that smote the Hebrew, and of the miracles that he did in Egypt or desert, and of the familiarity of God, when he spake to him many times amiably. And after this he excused him of the third blame that was in the law, in praising the law in three manners; first because of the giver, that was God; the second of the minister, which was Moses, that was a great prophet; and the third because of the end, for it giveth life perdurable. And after, he purged him of the blame of the tabernacle, and of the temple, in praising the tabernacle in four manners, one was because he was commanded of God to make it, and was showed in vision it was accomplished by Moses, and that the ark of witness was therein, and he said that the temple succeeded tabernacle. And the blessed Stephen purged him of that which was laid to him, of which the Jews saw they might not overcome him in that manner. And then they took the third battle against him, that they should surmount him by torments. And when the blessed S. Stephen saw this, he would keep the

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commandment of our Lord, and enforced him to refrain them in three manners; that was by shame, by dread, and by love. First by shame in blaming the hardness of their hearts, and said to them: Ye contrary alway the Holy Ghost by your hard heads, and hearts not piteous. Like as your fathers that persecuted the prophets, and slew them that showed the coming of God. And the gloss saith that in three manners they were malicious. The first, that they contraried the Holy Ghost. The second, that they persecuted the prophets, the third, that by their evil malice they slew Jesu Christ, but because they were like the common woman, they could have no shame to leaven their malice. But when they had heard these things they withsaid it in their hearts and grinded their teeth against him. After this he corrected them by dread, because that he said that he saw Jesu Christ on the right side of God, like as ready to help him, and condemn his adversaries, for S. Stephen, which was full of the Holy Ghost, looked up and beheld the heaven, and saw the glory of God, and said: Lo! I see the heavens open, and the son of the maid standing on the right side of the virtue of God. And how be it that he corrected them by shame and by dread, yet they left not their malice, but were more worse than tofore, and stopped their ears to the end that they would not hear him, whereof he blamed them. And they cried with an high voice, and made a great assault against him, and cast him out of the city altogether, and stoned him. And they supposed to have done after their law as a blasphemer, in commanding that he should be stoned out of the castles. And these two false witnesses, which after their law ought to cast the

first stone, took off their clothes because that they should not be touched of God, and to the end that they might better and lightlier bewield them to stone him, and they left them at the feet of a child that then was called Saul, and after he was called Paul, and thus he kept the clothes of them that stoned him, and he was stoned of them all. And when he might not withdraw them from their malice, ne by shame ne by dread, he took the third manner, so that he would withdraw them by love; and the love that he showed them was not little, when he prayed for him and for them that his passion might not be deferred, and that the sin should not be imputed to them that stoned him, and saying: Lord Jesu Christ receive my spirit. And when he was on his knees he cried with an high voice and said: Lord, establish not to them this sin. And this was a marvellous love, when he prayed on his knees for them that stoned him, like as if he had prayed more for them than for himself, for he desired to be more empeshed for them than for himself, and as the gloss saith: He kneeled for because he ought the more humbly to pray for them of whom the iniquity was great; and in this he did as did Jesu Christ, for in his passion he prayed for himself, and said: Father, I commend my spirit into thine hands; and he said for them that stoned him: Father, forgive it them. And when S. Stephen had so said, he slept in our lord and was not dead, for he suffered sacrifice of dilection, and after slept in hope of resurrection. And the stoning of S. Stephen was made in the same year that our Lord ascended up into heaven, in the next month of August, the third day entering. And S. Gamaliel, and Nicodemus, which were among the councils of the Jews for the christian men,

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buried him in the field of Gamaliel, and made great weeping for him: and then was great persecution of christian men that were in Jerusalem. For when the blessed S. Stephen, which was one of the princes, was slain, they began to persecute all the christian men, insomuch that the apostles, which were stronger than other in the faith, departed out of all the province of the Jews, after that which our Lord had commanded to them: If they persecute you in one city, flee you into another. And the blessed doctor S. Austin rehearseth that the blessed S. Stephen was noblished by many miracles; for he raised by his merits six dead bodies, and healed many that were sick of divers maladies and languors. And without this recounteth he other miracles, worthy and digne to be remembered; for as he saith in the twenty-second book of The City of God; the flowers that were put on the altar of S. Stephen were put on the sick men, and anon they were cured and healed; and the clothes taken from the altar and laid on them that were sick, were a medicine to many.

For as it is said in the eighth chapter of the same book, these flowers taken upon the altar of S. Stephen were laid on the eyes of a woman that was blind, and anon she had again her sight. And also said he in the same book that a man that was master of a city, and was named Marcial, and was a paynim and would not be converted; and it happed that he was strongly sick, and his son in law that was a right good man, came into the church of S. Stephen, and took the flowers, and laid them under the head of his lord; and anon, when he had slept thereupon, on the morning he cried that the bishop should be brought to him, and the bishop was not in the town, but the priest

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came to him and bade him to believe in God, and baptized him; and ever as long as he lived after he had alway in his mouth: Jesu Christ receive my spirit. And yet he wist not that those words were the words that S. Stephen last spake. And also he rehearseth another miracle in the same place, that a lady called Petronia had been sick much grievously, and had sought many remedies for to be healed of her malady, but she felt no heal. But in the end she had counsel of a Jew, which gave to her a ring with a stone, and that she should bind this ring with a lace to her bare flesh, and by the virtue of that stone she should be whole. And when she saw that this helped her not, she went to the church of the protomartyr, and prayed the blessed S. Stephen for her health, and anon, without breaking of the lace or of the ring, the ring fell down to the ground, and she felt herself anon all whole.

Item, the same recounteth another miracle, not less marvellous: that in Cæsarea of Cappadocia, was a lady much noble, of whom the husband was dead, but she had ten children, seven sons and three daughters. And on a time, when they had angered their mother, she cursed them, and the divine vengeance ensued suddenly the malediction of the mother, so that all the children were smitten with one semblable and horrible sickness on all their members, for which thing they might not dwell in the country for shame and for the sorrow that they had, and began to go follily through the world. And in whatsoever country they went, ever each man beheld them. And it happed that two of them, that is to wit a brother and a sister came to Hippo, and the brother was named Paul, and the sister Palladia. And there they found Austin the bishop and told

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to him and recounted what was happed. Then they haunted the church of S. Stephen by the space of fifteen days, and it was tofore Easter, and they prayed strongly the saint for their health. And on Easter-day when the people was present Paul entered suddenly within the chancel and put him to prayer by great devotion, and with great reverence tofore the altar, and as they that were there abode upon the end of the thing, he arose up apparently all whole of his trembling. Then S. Austin took him and showed him to the people, and said that on the morn he would tell them the case. And as he spake to the people the sister was there trembling on all her members, and she arose up and entered into the chancel of S. Stephen, and anon she slept, and after arose suddenly all whole, and was showed to the people as was done tofore of her brother, and then graces and thankings were given to S. Stephen for the health of them both.

When Orosius came from Jerusalem he brought to S. Austin of the relics of S. Stephen of whom many miracles were showed and done. It is to wit that the blessed S. Stephen suffered not death on the day of his feast, but it was on the day that his Invention is on, in the month of August. And if it be demanded why the feast is changed, it shall be said when his Invention shall be said. And this may suffice you for this present, for the church will also ordain the feasts which follow the nativity of Jesu Christ, for two causes. The first is to Jesu Christ which is head and spouse, to the end that the accompanies be joined to him, for Jesu Christ spouse of the church in this world adjoineth to him three companies, of which companies is said in the Canticles: My white soul and ruddy, chosen of thousands. The white is as to

S. John the Evangelist, a precious confessor, and the ruddy or red is as to S. Stephen the first martyr, and chosen of thousands, is to the virginal company of the innocents. The second reason is that the church assembleth also together, the manners of the martyrs, the same by will and by work, the second by will and not by deed, the third by deed and not by will. The first was the blessed Stephen, the second was in S. John the Evangelist, the third was in saints and glorious innocents which for God suffered passion. The Life of S. John

And next followeth of S. John the Evangelist.

John is expounded the grace of God, or he in whom grace is, or to whom it is given of our Lord, and therefore been understood four privileges that be in the blessed S. John. The first was the noble love of Jesu Christ, for he loved him more than the other and showed to him of greater love, and therefore he is said the grace of God, also as gracious God. And to him he was more gracious than to Peter, for he loved him much, but he is love of courage and of sign, and this that is of signs is double. That one is for to show familiarity and that other is in giving benefices. As to the first he loved that one and the other equally, as to the second he loved more John, and as to the third, he loved more Peter. The second was virginity when he was chosen virgin of God, and therefore it is said in what is that grace, for grace of virginity is in a virgin, and when he would marry he was called of God. The third is the revelation of the secrets of our Lord, therefore it is said to whom grace is given, for to him was

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given to know many secrets and profound, as of the divinity of the Son of God, and of the end of the world. The fourth is the recommendation of the mother of God, which gift of grace was given of our Lord, for this gift was given to him when the mother was given to him into keeping. And Miletus, Bishop of Liege, wrote his life, the which Isidore abridged and set it in the book of nativities of the life and the death of holy fathers.

S. John the apostle and evangelist was son of Zebedee, which had married the third sister of our Lady to wife, and that was brother to S. James of Galicia. This said John signifieth as much as the grace of God, and well might he have such a name, for he had of our Lord four graces above the other apostles. The first is that he was beloved of our Lord. The second was, that our Lord kept to him his virginity like as S. Jerome saith, for he was at his wedding, and he abode a clean virgin. The third is that our Lord made him to have much great revelation and knowledge of his divinity, and of the finishing of the world, like as it appeareth in the beginnings of his evangel, and in the Apocalypse. The fourth grace is that our Lord committed to him in especial the keeping of his sweet mother. He was, after the ascension of our Lord, in Jerusalem with the apostles and others, and after that they were, by the ordinance of the Holy Ghost, confirmed in the christian faith by the universal world, S. John came into Greece where he conversed and converted much people and founded many churches in the christian faith as well by miracles as by doctrine.

In this time Domitian was Emperor of Rome, which made right great persecutions unto christian

men, and did do take S. John, and did him to be brought to Rome and made him to be cast into a vat or a ton full of hot oil in the presence of the senators, of which he issued out, by the help of God, more pure and more fair, without feeling of any more heat or chauffing, than he entered in. After this that emperor saw that he ceased not to preach the christian faith, he sent him into exile unto an isle called Patmos. There was S. John alone, and was visited of angels and governed; there wrote he by the revelation of our Lord the Apocalypse, which contained the secrets of holy church and of the world to come. The Life of S. John

In this same year was Domitian the emperor, for his evils, put to death, and all that he had done was revoked by the senators and defeated, and thus was S. John brought again from his exile with great honour into Ephesus; and all the people of Ephesus came against him singing and saying: Blessed be he that cometh in the name of our Lord. In that way he raised a woman which was named Drusiana, which had much loved S. John and well kept his commandments. And her friends brought her tofore S. John all weeping and saying to him: Lo! here is Drusiana which much loved thee and did thy commandments, and is dead, and desired nothing so much as thy return, and that she might see thee tofore her death. Now thou art come hither and she may not see thee. S. John had great pity on her that was dead, and of the people that wept for her, and commanded that they should set down the bier, and unbind and take away the clothes from her. And when they had so done he said, hearing all, with a loud voice, Drusiana, my Lord God Jesu Christ ariseth thee; Drusiana arise, and go into

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thy house, and make ready for me some refection. Anon she arose and went in to her house for to do the commandment of S. John, and the people made three hours long a great noise and cry, saying there is but one God, and that is he whom S. John preacheth.

It happed on another day that Crato the philosopher made a great assembly of people in the midst of the city, for to show to them how they ought to despise the world. And he had ordained two young men brethren which were much rich, and had made them to sell their patrimony and therewith to buy precious stones, the which these two young men brake in the presence of the people, for to show how these precious and great riches of the world be soon destroyed. That same time S. John passed by, and said to Crato the philosopher: This manner for to despise the world that thou showest is vain and foolish demonstrance, for it seeketh to have the praising of the world, and God reproveth it. My good master Jesu Christ said to a man that demanded of him how he might come to everlasting life, that he should go and sell his goods and give that he received of it to the poor people, and that he should find treasure in heaven. Crato said then to him: The price and value of these precious stones is destroyed in the presence of all men here, but if thy master be very God, and he will that the goods of the world be given to poor men, take then the pieces of these precious stones broken, and make them whole stones as they were tofore; because if I have showed this by vain glory, make thou them to the honour of thy master. Anon, S. John took the pieces of the precious stones, and after that he had made his prayer to God, he showed to them the

stones as whole as ever they were or had been. When Crato the philosopher saw this, anon he with his two men and his disciples fell down to the feet of S. John and received the faith and baptism of Jesu Christ, and sold the precious stones and gave the money thereof for the love of God, and begun to preach the faith of our Lord Jesu Christ. Then the two brethren, much rich and honoured in the city of Ephesus, anon they sold all their patrimony and gave it for the love of God. But after, when they came in to the city of Pergamia and saw them that had been their servants clothed in silk and in great honor of the world, and themselves having but a poor mantle or peradventure a poor coat, anon they repented them that they had given away their goods in alms to poor people. This apperceived S. John and said to them: I see that ye be heavy and sorrowful of this, that after the doctrine of Jesu Christ ye have given your goods for God's sake, wherefore if ye will have again the value of your goods, bring to me rods of the trees and stones of the rivage of the sea. And so they did, and when S. John had them, anon by his prayer he changed the rods into fine gold, and the common stones into precious stones, and S. John bade them to take them and show to the masters that had knowledge in such jewels if the rods were gold and the common stones precious stones. After they came again and said to S. John: Sire, the masters say they saw never so fine gold ne so precious stones. S. John then said to them: Go ye and buy ye again your lands that ye have sold, for ye have lost the reward of heaven, be ye rich temporally for to be beggars perpetually. Then began he to preach in despiting the riches, and to show six causes why

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we ought to restrain us for to love riches, First, the scripture learneth us to hate riches and reciteth in the gospel how the rich man that was clad in purple, and ate every day delicious meats gluttonously, was lost and damned; but the poor man at his gate that died full of sores and hungry, was saved. Secondly, nature teacheth us to hate riches, for we be born poor and naked, and poorly must we depart and die. Thirdly, the creature teacheth us how the sun, the moon, the stars, the rain and the air be common, and depart their influences and their benefices largely. Fourthly, the man is not oft in one estate, for when he weeneth to be rich, plenteous and free, he findeth himself bond and captive. For the rich man adverse is bond and servant to the penny and the devil. Amator pecuniae servus est mammonae. Fifthly, sorrow and care, for by day and night he hath great labour in getting in and keeping of it, and great dread to lose that which he hath so dear and with great pain gotten. Sixthly, avaunting and praising, for the riches give occasion to be vain glorious and to praise and glorify himself. And by this it appeareth that presently is lost the weal of humility, without which the grace of God may not be had, and thus is gotten, for the world to come, pain and torment by over-great pride. Scripture then, nature, creature, fortune, business and care, avaunting and praising, ought to make us withdraw for to love riches. S. John approved to these two men his doctrine, with his miracles, to be true. And ye in the name of him did miracles tofore that ye were sorry and repented you of that ye had given your riches to poor people. Now is that grace from you departed and ye become meschant and wretches, which were in the faith

strong and mighty. And tofore, the evil spirits had fear and dread of you, and by your commandment they issued out of bodies human, now have ye fear and dread of them and be become their servants. For whoso loveth the riches of this world, he is servant unto a devil named Mammon, and is bond and serf in keeping the riches in which he setteth his affiance. And hereof saith the Holy Ghost by the prophet David: In imagine pertransit homo, etc.: Vainly is the man distroubled which assembleth treasure in this world, and knoweth not for whom it is, for when he shall die he shall bear nothing with him, and he wotteth not who shall dispend it, for naked we came upon the earth and all naked shall we re-enter into it. And to a meschant man it sufficeth not when he hath enough, but he is busy day and night to get more without rest. For the riches make him fearful to lose that he hath gotten, and bringeth to him many businesses and evil rest in making worldly delights. And he, dispurveyed, death cometh which taketh all from him, and beareth nothing with him save his proper sins. When S. John had said all this there was brought tofore him a young man dead, which only had been in marriage thirty days. And his mother and friends wept sore, which tofore S. John kneeled down on their knees, praying him that he would raise him to life. S. John had great pity, and when he had long wept he bade to loose and unbind the body and said: O Satheus, which wert blinded with fleshly love, soon thou hast lost thy soul, and because thou knewest not thy maker Jesu Christ, thou art fallen ignorantly into the leash of the right evil fiends, wherefore I weep and pray that thou mayst be releved from death

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to life, and show thou to these twain, Actius and Eugenius, what great glory they have lost and what pain they have deserved. Anon Satheus releved him in yielding thankings to S. John, and blamed much the two disciples in saying: I saw your two angels weep and the devils demene joy of your perdition, also I saw the realm of heaven made ready for you and full of all delights, and ye have follily gotten for you the place of hell, dark and tenebrous, full of dragons and of all pains, and therefore it behoveth you to pray to the apostle of God that he remise and bring you again to your salvation, like as he hath revived me goodly. And among all other pains, this Satheus reciteth these that be contained in two verses following:

Vermes et umbræ, flagellum, frigus et ignis,
Dæmonis aspectus, scelerum confusio, luctus.

that is to say: worms, darkness, scourges, cold, heat, sight of devil, confusion of sins, and wailing. Anon then these two men by right great repentance prayed S. John that he would pray for them, to whom S. John answered that they should do penance thirty days long, and pray to God that the rods of gold and the precious stones might return to their first proper natures. After these thirty days they came to S. John and said to him: Fair father, ye have always preached misericord and mercy, and commanded that one should pardon another his trespass, we be contrite and repentant of our sins and weep with our eyes for this evil worldly covetise, the which we have by them received, and therefore we pray you that ye have mercy on us. And S. John answered: Our Lord God when he made mention of the sinner he said, I will not the death of the

sinner, but that he be converted and live, for great joy is in Heaven of a sinner repentant. And therefore know ye that he hath received your repentance, go ye forth and bear the rods and stones thither where ye took them, for they be returned to their first nature. Thus received they the grace that they had lost, so that after they did great miracles in the name of our Lord Jesu Christ. The Life of S. John

And then after this when the blessed apostle S. John had preached through all Asia, and sown the word of Christ, they that worshipped idols moved the people against S. John, and came and drove him into the temple of Diana for to constrain him to do sacrifice unto that idol. To whom S. John said: Sith ye believe that your goddess Diana hath so great power, call ye upon her and require her by her power she subvert and overthrow the Church of Christ, and if she so do, I shall do sacrifice to her, and if she do it not, then let me pray unto my God Jesu Christ that he overthrow her temple, and if he so do then believe ye in him. To this sentence the most part of the people consented, and so they prayed, and nothing they could not do ne prevail against the Church of Christ. But S. John made his prayers and anon the temple of Diana fell down and was overthrown, so that the foundement turned up so down, and the image of Diana all-to dashed and destroyed. And that same day were converted to Christ's faith twelve thousand men of the Gentiles, besides women and children. Then Aristodemus, bishop of the idols, stirred and moved sedition among the people, in such wise that that one party made them ready to battle against that other party. Then said the apostle to him: What wilt thou that I do that thou mayest be pleased? To whom the

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bishop said: If thou wilt that I believe in thy God I shall give to thee venom to drink, and if it hurt not thee, then thy Lord is very God. Then said S. John: Do as thou hast said. Then said the bishop: I will first that thou see others die thereof tofore, because thou shouldst the more dread it. Then went Aristodemus to the proconsul of the city and demanded of him two men judged to death for to have been beheaded, and tofore them all, he gave to them to drink the venom, which men as soon as they had drunken it incontinent died. Then S. John took the cup with the venom and blessed it with the sign of the cross, and drank it of every deal and had ne felt none hurt ne harm, wherefore all the people gave laud and praising to God. Aristodemus said: Yet have I a doubt, but and if thou raise to life again the dead men that drank the venom, without doubt then shall I believe. Then the apostle delivered him his coat, to whom he said: Why givest thou to me thy coat? And S. John said because that thou ashamed and confused shalt go from and forsake thy infidelity. To whom he said: Trowest thou that thy coat shall make me believe? And the apostle said: Go and lay it upon the bodies of the dead men, saying: The apostle of Christ hath sent me to you that ye arise in the name of Christ, which when he had done, anon they arose from death to life. Then the apostle baptized the bishop and the proconsul, believing in Christ, with all their kin and friends, which anon brake all their simulachres, and in the same place edified a church in the worship of God and of S. John. The holy S. Clement rehearseth in the fourth book of Historia Ecclesiastica, that on a time S. John the Evangelist converted to the

faith a goodly young man, well-favoured and strong, and commanded him unto the keeping, rule, and governance of a bishop. And within a little while after, this young man forsook the bishop and fell into evil company among thieves, and became and was made master and prince of them. Anon after, the apostle came to the bishop and demanded for the young man, and the bishop was sore abashed. When S. John saw his countenance he demanded more busilier after him, and where he had left him, for I ask him of thee, whom I delivered to thee, and gave thee so great charge with him. Then said the bishop to him: Father, truly he is dead in his soul, and is in yonder mountain with thieves, and is their master and prince. And when he heard that, for sorrow he rent his clothes, and said to the bishop: Thou art a feeble keeper for to suffer thy brother to lose his soul. Anon he made a horse to be made ready for him, and rode fast to the mountain, and when the young man espied and knew him he was so sore ashamed that he fled from him. Then the apostle forgot his age and pricked after, and cried after him that fled: My most sweet son, why fleest thou from thy father feeble and old? Be thou not afeard, son, for I shall yield account for thee to Jesu Christ, and truly I shall gladly die for thee like as Jesu Christ died for us. Turn again my son, turn again, Jesu Christ hath sent me to thee. And when he heard him thus speak he abode with a heavy cheer and wept, repenting him bitterly, and fell down to the feet of the apostle, and for penance kissed his hand. And the apostle fasted and prayed to God for him, and gat for him remission of his sins and forgiveness,

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and he lived so virtuously after, that S. John ordained him to be a bishop.

Also it is read in the same history that S. John on a time entered into a bath for to wash him, and there he found Cerinthus an heretic, whom as soon as he saw he eschewed, and went out of it saying: Let us flee and go hence lest the bath fall upon us in which Cerinthus the enemy of truth washeth him, and as soon as he was out the bath fell down.

Cassiodorus saith that a man had given to S. John a partridge living, and he held it in his hand stroking and playing with it otherwhile for his recreation. And on a time a young man passed by with his fellowship and saw him play with his bird, which said to his fellows, laughing: See how the yonder old man playeth with a bird like a child. Which S. John knew anon, by the Holy Ghost, what he had said, and called the young man to him and demanded him what he held in his hand, and he said a bow. What dost thou withal? said S. John. And the young man said: We shoot birds and beasts therewith, to whom the apostle demanded how and in what manner. Then the young man bent his bow and held it in his hand bent, and when the apostle said no more to him he unbent his bow again. Then said the apostle to him: Why hast thou unbent thy bow? And he said: Because if it should be long bent it should be the weaker for to shoot with it. Then said the apostle, So son, it fareth by mankind and by frailty in contemplation, if it should alway be bent it should be too weak, and therefor otherwhile it is expedient to have recreation. The eagle is the bird that flyeth highest, and most clearly beholdeth the sun, and

yet by necessity of nature him behoveth to descend low, right so when mankind withdraweth him a little from contemplation, he after putteth himself higher by a renewed strength, and he burneth then more fervently in heavenly things. The Life of S. John

S. John wrote his gospels after the other Evangelists, the year after the ascension of our Lord sixty-six, after this that the venerable Bede saith. And when he was required and prayed of the bishops of the country of Ephesus to write them, S. John prayed also to them, that they should fast and pray in their dioceses three days for him to the end that he might truly write them. S. Jerome saith of this glorious apostle S. John, that, when he was so old, so feeble and so unmighty that his disciples sustained and bare him in going to church, and as of times he rested, he said to his disciples: Fair children, love ye together, and each of you love other. And then his disciples demanded why and wherefore he said to them so oft such words. He answered to them and said: Our Lord had so commanded, and whosomever accomplished well this commandment it should suffice him for to be saved. And finally after that he had founded many churches and had ordained bishops and priests in them, and confirmed them by his predication in the christian faith, the year sixty-eight after the resurrection of Jesu Christ, for he was thirty-one years old when our Lord was crucified, and lived after sixty-eight years, and thus was all his age ninety-nine years. Then came our Lord with his disciples to him and said: Come my friend to me, for it is time that thou come, eat and be fed at my table with thy brethren. Then S. John arose up and said to our Lord Jesu Christ, that he had desired it long

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time, and began to go. Then said our Lord to him: On Sunday next coming thou shalt come to me. That Sunday the people came all to the church, which was founded in his name and consecrate on that one side of Ephesus, and from midnight forth he ceased not to preach to the people that they should establish them and be stedfast in the christian faith and obeissant to the commandments of God. And after this he said the mass, and houseled and communed the people: and after that the mass was finished he bade and did do make a pit or a sepulture tofore the altar; and after that he had taken his leave and commended the people to God, he descended down into the pit or sepulture tofore the altar, and held up his hands to heaven and said: Sweet Lord Jesu Christ, I yield me unto thy desire, and thank thee that thou hast vouchsafed to call me to thee, if it please thee, receive me for to be with my brethren, with whom thou hast summoned me, open to me the gate of the life permanable, and lead me to the feast of thy well and best dressed meats. Thou art Christ the son of the living God, which by the commandment of the father hast saved the world, to thee I render and yield grace and thankings, world without end, thou knowest well that I have desired thee with all my heart. After that he had made his prayer much amorously and piteously, anon came upon him great clearness and light, and so great brightness that none might see him, and when this light and brightness was gone and departed, there was nothing found in the pit or grave but manna, which came springing from under upward, like as sand in a fountain or springing well, where much people have been delivered of many diseases and sicknesses by the

merits and prayers of this glorious saint. Some say and affirm that he died without pain of death, and that he was in that clearness borne into heaven body and soul, whereof God knoweth the certainty. And we, that be yet here beneath in this misery, ought to pray devoutly to him that he would impetre and get to us the grace of our Lord which is blessed in secula seculorum. Amen.

The Life of S. John

There was a king, a holy confessor and virgin, named S. Edward, which had a special devotion unto S. John Evangelist, and it happed that this holy king was at the hallowing of a church dedicate in the honour of God and of this holy apostle; and it was that S. John in likeness of a pilgrim came to this king and demanded his alms in the name of S. John, and the king not having his almoner by him, ne his chamberlain, of whom he might have somewhat to give him, took his ring which he bare on his finger and gave it to the pilgrim. After these many days, it happened two pilgrims of England for to be in the Holy Land, and S. John appeared to them and bade them to bear this ring to their king and to greet him well in his name, and to tell him that he gave it to S. John in likeness of a pilgrim, and that he should make him ready to depart out of this world, for he should not long abide here but come into everlasting bliss, and so vanished from them. And anon as he was gone they had great lust to sleep, and laid them down and slept, and this was in the Holy Land, and when they awoke they looked about them and knew not where they were. And they saw flocks of sheep and shepherds keeping them, to whom they went to know the way, and to demand where they were, and when they asked them they spake English and said that they were

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in England, in Kent on Barham Down. And then they thanked God and S. John for their good speed, and came to this holy king S. Edward on Christmas day, and delivered to him the ring and did their errand, whereof the king was abashed, and thanked God and the holy saint that he had warning for to depart. And on the vigil of the Epiphany next after he died and departed holily out of this world, and is buried in the Abbey of Westminster by London where is yet to this day the same ring.

Isidore, in the book of the life and death of holy saints and fathers, saith this: S. John the Evangelist transformed and turned rods of trees into fine gold, the stones and gravel of the sea into precious gems and ouches, the small broken pieces of gems he reformed into their first nature, he raised a widow from death, and brought again the soul of a young man into his body, he drank venom without hurt or peril, and them that had been dead by the same he recovered into the state of life.

Here followeth the History of the Innocents.

The Innocents be called innocents for three reasons. First, by cause and reason of life, and by reason of pain, and by reason of innocence. By reason of life they be said innocents because they had an innocent life. They grieved nobody, neither God, by inobedience, ne their neighbours by untruth, ne by conceiving of any sin, and therefore it is said in the psalter: The innocents and righteous have joined them to me. The innocents by their life and righteousness in the

faith, by reason of pain, for they suffered death innocently and wrongly, whereof David saith: They have shed the blood of innocents by reason of innocency that they had, because that in this martyrdom they were baptized and made clean of the original sin, of which innocence is said in the psalter: Keep thou innocency of baptism and see equity of good works. **The History of the Innocents**

Holy church maketh feast of the Innocents which were put to death because of our Lord Jesu Christ. For Herod Ascalonita for to find and put to death our Lord which was born in Bethlehem, he did do slay all the children in Bethlehem and there about, from the age of two years and under unto one day, unto the sum of one hundred and forty-four thousand children. For to understand which Herod it was that so cruelly did do put so many children to death, it is to wit that there were three Herods, and all three were cruel tyrants, and were in their time of great fame and much renowned for their great malice. The first was Herod Ascalonita: he reigned in Jerusalem when our Lord was born. The second was Herod Antipas, to whom Pilate sent Jesu Christ in the time of his passion, and he did do smite off S. John Baptist's head. The third was Herod Agrippa, which did do smite off S. James's head, said in Galicia, and set S. Peter in prison. But now let us come to this first Herod that did do slay the innocent children. His father was named Antipater as history scholastic saith, and was king of Idumea and paynim; he took a wife which was niece to the king of Arabia, on whom he had three sons and a daughter, of whom that one was named Herod Ascalonita. This Herod served so well to Julian the emperor of Rome that he gave

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to him the realm of Jerusalem. Then lost the Jews kings of their lineage, and then was showed the prophecy of the birth of our Lord. This Herod Ascalonita had six sons, Antipater, Alexander, Aristobulus, Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Philip. Of these children, Herod sent Alexander and Aristobulus to school to Rome, and Alexander became a wise and subtle advocate. And when they were come from school again they began to enter into words against Herod their father, to whom he would leave his realm after him, wherefore their father was angry with them, and put tofore them Antipater their brother for to come to the realm. Upon that, incontinent they treated of the death of their father, wherefore their father enchased them away, and they went again to Rome and complained of their father to the emperor.

Anon after this came the three kings in to Jerusalem, and demanded where the king of Jews was, that was new born. Herod when he heard this, he had great dread lest any were born of the true lineage of the kings of the Jews, and that he were the very true heir, and of whom he might be chased out of the realm. And when he had demanded of the three kings how they had had knowledge of the new king, they answered by a star being in the air, which was not naturally fixed in the heaven as the others were. Then he prayed them that they would return to him after that they had worshipped and seen this new king, that he might go after and worship the child. This said he fraudulently, for he thought to slay him. After that the three kings were gone without bringing him any tidings, he thought that anon he would do slay all the children newly born in Bethlehem and thereabouts, among whom he

thought to slay Jesu Christ. But his thought was empeshed and let, for the emperor sent to him a citation that he should come to Rome for to answer to the accusation that Aristobulus and Alexander, his two sons, had made against him, and therefore he durst not put then the children to death, to the end that he should not be accused of so cruel a deed with his other trespasses; so he was in going to Rome and abiding there, and in coming, more than half a year, and in that while Jesus was borne into Egypt. When Herod came to Rome the emperor ordained that his sons should do him honour and obey him, and he should leave his realm after his death where it best pleased him. Upon this, when he was come again, and felt himself confirmed of the realm, he was more hardy to slay the children than he had tofore thought. Then he sent into Bethlehem and did do slay all the children that were of the age of two years, because it was passed more than a year that the three kings had told him tidings of the king of Jews new-born. But wherefore then did he do slay the children that were but one night old? Hereto S. Austin saith that Herod doubted that Jesus, to whom the stars served, might make himself some younger than he was. After this came upon Herod a right vengeance, for like as he dissevered many mothers from their children, in like wise was he dissevered from his children. It happed that he had suspicion upon his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus; for one of his servants said to him that Alexander had promised to him great gifts if he would give to his father to drink poison or venom, and the barber said to the king that he had promised him a great thing if, when he made the king's beard, he would cut his throat,

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and for this cause Herod did do slay them both, and ordained in his testament that Antipater, his son, should be king after him. Upon this Antipater, his son, had great desire to come to the realm, and was accused that he had made ready venom for to empoison his father, for a maid, a servant, afterward showed the same venom to the king, wherefore he did do put his son Antipater in prison. When Augustus, the emperor of Rome, heard say that Herod ruled thus his children, he then said: I had liefer be the swine or hog of Herod than his son, for he which is strange in his living spareth his swine, and he put to death his sons.

Herod when he was seventy years old he fell in a grievous malady by right vengeance of God, for a strong fever took him within and without; he had his flesh hot and dry chauffed, his feet swelled and became of a pale colour. The plants of his feet under began to rot, in such wise that vermin issued out, and a stench issued so great out of his breath and of his members without forth, that no persons might suffer it. On that other side he had great grief and annoy of the anger that he had for his sons. When the masters and physicians saw that he might not be holpen by no medicine, then they said that this malady was a vengeance of God, and for as much as he heard say that the Jews were glad of his malady and sickness, therefore he did do assemble the most noble of the Jews out of the good towns, and did do put them in prison and said to Salome, his sister, and to Alexander her husband: I know well that the Jews shall be glad of my death, but if ye will do my counsel and obey to me I shall mowe have great plaint and wailing of many that shall beweep

my death, in this wise that I shall show you. Anon as I shall be dead, do ye to be slain all the noble Jews that be in prison, and thus shall be no house of the Jews, but they shall, against their will, beweep my death. And he had a custom to eat an apple last after meat. On a time he demanded a knife for to pare the apple, and one delivered him a knife, and shortly he took it, as all despaired, and would have slain himself, but anon Aciabus, his neighbour, caught his hand and cried loud, that it was supposed that the king had died. Antipater his son, which was in prison, had heard the cry and weened his father had been dead. He was glad, and promised to the keepers of the prison great gifts for to let him out. When Herod knew this by his servant, he travailed the more grievously because his son was more glad of his death than of his sickness, and anon did do slay him, and ordained in his testament, Archelaus to be king after him, and he lived but five days after and died in great misery of annoy. Salome, his sister, did not his commandment of the Jews that were in prison, but let them go out. And Archelaus became king after Herod his father, which as to strangers in the battle he was fortunate and happy, but as to his own people he was right unhappy. Then I return again; after that, Joseph was gone with our Lord into Egypt and was there seven years, unto the death of Herod. And after the prophecy of Isaiah, at the entering of our Lord into Egypt, the idols fell down, for like as at departing of the children out of Egypt, in every house the oldest son of the Egyptians lay one dead, in like wise at the coming of our Lord lay down the idols in the temples.

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Cassiodorus saith in the History tripartite, in

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Hermopolin of Thebaid there was a tree called Persidis, which is medicinal for all sicknesses, for if the leaf or rind of that tree be bound to the neck of the sick person, it healeth him anon, and as the blessed Virgin Mary fled with her son, that tree bowed down and worshipped Jesu Christ. Also Macrobius saith in a chronicle that, a young son of Herod was nourished at that time, and he was slain among the other children. And then was fulfilled the prophecy saying: The voice is heard in Rama of great weeping and wailing, that the sorrowful mothers wept for the death of their children, and might not be comforted, because they were not alive.

Here followeth the Life of S. Thomas, martyr, of Canterbury, and first the exposition of his name.

Thomas is as much to say as abisme or double, or trenched and hewn, he was an abisme profound in humility, as it appeared in the hair that he wore, and in washing of the feet of the poor people, double in prelation that was in word and in ensample, and hewn and trenched in his passion. S. Thomas the martyr was son to Gilbert Beckett, a burgess of the city of London, and was born in the place where as now standeth the church called S. Thomas of Acre. And this Gilbert was a good devout man, and took the cross upon him, and went on pilgrimage into the Holy Land, and had a servant with him. And when he had accomplished his pilgrimage, he was taken homeward by the heathen men and brought into the prison of a prince named Amurath, where long time he and his fellowship suffered much pain

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and sorrow. And the prince had great affection towards this Gilbert, and had often communication with him of the christian faith, and of the realm of England, by which conversation it fortuned that the daughter of this prince had especial love unto this Gilbert, and was familiar with him. And on a time she disclosed her love to him, saying if he would promise to wed her she should forsake friends, heritage and country, for his love and become christian, and after long communication between them he promised to wed her if she would become christian, and told to her the place of his dwelling in England. And after, by the purveyance of God, the said Gilbert escaped and came home. And after this it fortuned so that this prince's daughter stole privily away, and passed many a wild place and great adventure, and by God's purveyance at last came to London demanding and crying Becket! Becket! for more English could she not; wherefore the people drew about her, what for the strange array of her, as for that they understood her not, and many a shrewd boy. So long she went till she came tofore Gilbert's door, and as she stood there, the servant that had been with Gilbert in prison which was named Richard, saw her and knew that it was she, and went in to his master, and told him how that this maid stood at his door; and anon he went out to see her. And as soon as she saw him she fell in a swoon for joy, and Gilbert took her up, and comforted her, and brought her into his house, and sith went to the bishops, which then were six at Paul's, and rehearsed all the matter, and after they christened her, and forthwith wedded her unto Gilbert Becket, and within time reasonable and accustomed, was brought forth between them

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a fair son named Thomas. And after this, yet the said Gilbert went again to the Holy Land and was there three years ere he came again. And this child grew forth till he was set to school, and learned well and became virtuous, and when he was twenty-four years old his mother passed out of this world. And after this he served a merchant of London a while in keeping his charge and accompts, and from him he went to Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, and he was in so great favour with him that he made him archdeacon and chief of his counsel, and well executed he his office in punishing the culpable and cherishing the good people. And divers times went to Rome for to support and help holy church. And after this Henry II. that was the emperor's son was made king of England, and he ordained this Thomas his chancellor, and had great rule, and the land stood in prosperity. And S. Thomas stood so greatly in the king's favour that the king was content with all that he did, and when the king went into Normandy he betook the governance of his son and the realm into the rule of S. Thomas, which he wisely governed till his return again. And anon after died Theobald, the archbishop of Canterbury, and then the king gave his nomination to S. Thomas, and by the chapter was elected in the year of his age, forty-four, and was full loth to take that great charge upon him. And so at last, his bulls had, he was sacred and stalled and became a holy man, suddenly changed into a new man, doing great penance, as in wearing hair with knots, and a breech of the same down to the knees. And on a Trinity Sunday received he his dignity, and there was at that time the king with many a great lord and sixteen bishops. And

from thence was sent the abbot of Evesham to the pope with other clerks for the pall which he gave and brought to him, and he full meekly received it. And under his habit he ware the habit of a monk, and so was he under within forth a monk, and outward a clerk, and did great abstinence making his body lean and his soul fat. And he used to be well served at his table, and took but little refection thereof, and lived holily in giving good ensample. **The Life of S. Thomas of Canterbury**

After this, many times the king went over into Normandy, and in his absence always S. Thomas had the rule of his son and of the realm, which was governed so well that the king could him great thanks, and then abode long in this realm. And when so was that the king did any thing against the franchise and liberties of holy church, S. Thomas would ever withstand it to his power. And on a time when the sees of London and of Winchester were vacant and void, the king kept them both long in his hand for to have the profits of them; wherefore S. Thomas was heavy, and came to the king and desired him to give those two bishopricks to some virtuous men. And anon the king granted to him his desire and ordained one master Roger, bishop of Winchester, and the Earl of Gloucester's son, bishop of London, named Sir Robert. And anon after S. Thomas hallowed the abbey of Reading, which the first Henry founded. And that same year he translated S. Edward, king and confessor at Westminster, where he was laid in a rich shrine. And in some short time after, by the enticement of the devil, fell great debate, variance, and strife, between the king and S. Thomas, and the king sent for all the bishops to appear tofore him at Westminster

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at a certain day, at which day they assembled tofore him, whom he welcomed, and after said to them how that the archbishop would destroy his law, and not suffer him to enjoy such things as his predecessors had used tofore him. Whereto S. Thomas answered that he never intended to do thing that should displease the king as far as it touched not the franchise and liberties of holy church. Then the king rehearsed how he would not suffer clerks that were thieves to have the execution of the law; to which S. Thomas said, that he ought not to execute them, but they longeth to the correction of holy church, and other divers points; to which S. Thomas would not agree. To the which the king said: Now I see well that thou wouldest foredo the laws of this land which have been used in the days of my predecessors, but it shall not lie in thy power, and so the king being wroth departed. Then the bishops all counselled S. Thomas to follow the king's intent, or else the land should be in great trouble; and in like wise the lords temporal that were his friends counselled him the same, and S. Thomas said: I take God to record it was never mine intent to displease the king, or to take any thing that longeth to his right or honour. And then the lords were glad and brought him to the king to Oxenford, and the king deigned not to speak to him. And then the king called all the lords spiritual and temporal tofore him, and said he would have all the laws of his forefathers there new confirmed, and there they were confirmed by all the lords spiritual and temporal. And after this the king charged them for to come to him to Clarendon to his parliament at a certain day assigned, on pain to run in his indignation,

and at that time so departed. And this parliament was holden at Clarendon, the eleventh year of the king's reign, and the year of our Lord eleven hundred and sixty-four. At this parliament were many lords which all were against S. Thomas. And then the king sitting in his parliament, in the presence of all his lords, demanded them if they would abide and keep the laws that had been used in his forefathers' days. Then S. Thomas spake for the part of holy church, and said: All old laws that be good and rightful, and not against our mother holy church, I grant with good will to keep them. And then the king said that he would not leave one point of his law, and waxed wroth with S. Thomas. And then certain bishops required S. Thomas to obey to the king's desire and will, and S. Thomas desired respite to know the laws, and then to give him an answer. And when he understood them all, to some he consented, but many he denied and would never be agreeable to them, wherefore the king was wroth and said he would hold and keep them like as his predecessors had done before him, and would not minish one point of them. Then S. Thomas said to the king with full great sorrow and heavy cheer, Now, my most dear lord and gracious king, have pity on us of holy church, your bedemen, and give to us respite for a certain time. And thus departed each man. And S. Thomas went to Winchester, and there prayed our Lord devoutly for holy church, and to give him aid and strength for to defend it, for utterly he determined to abide by the liberties and franchise, and fell down on his knees and said, full sore weeping: O good Lord, I acknowledge that I have offended, and for mine offence and trespass this trouble cometh to holy

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church, I purpose, good Lord, to go to Rome for to be assoiled of mine offences; and departed towards Canterbury. And anon the king sent his officers to his manors and despoiled them, because he would not obey the king's statutes. And the king commanded to seize all his lands and goods into his hands, and then his servants departed from him, and he went to the seaside for to have gone over sea, but the wind was against him, and so thrice he took his ship and might not pass. And then he knew that it was not our Lord's will that he should yet depart, and returned secretly to Canterbury, of whose coming his meiny made great joy. And on the morn came the king's officers for to seize all his goods, for the noise was that S. Thomas had fled the land; wherefore they had despoiled all his manors and seized them into the king's hand. And when they came they found him at Canterbury, whereof they were sore abashed, and returned to the king informing him that he was yet at Canterbury, and anon after S. Thomas came to the king to Woodstock for to pray him to be better disposed towards holy church. And then said the king to him in scorn: May not we two dwell both in this land? Art thou so sturdy and hard of heart? To whom S. Thomas answered: Sire, that was never my thought, but I would fain please you, and do all that you desire so that ye hurt not the liberties of holy church, for them will I maintain while I live, ever to my power. With which words the king was sore moved, and swore that he would have them kept, and especial if a clerk were a thief he should be judged and executed by the king's law, and by no spiritual law, and said he would never suffer a clerk to be his master in his

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own land, and charged S. Thomas to appear before him at Northampton, and to bring all the bishops of this land with him, and so departed. S. Thomas besought God of help and succour, for the bishops which ought to be with him were most against him. After this S. Thomas went to Northampton where the king had then his great council in the castle with all his lords, and when he came tofore the king he said: I am come to obey your commandment, but before this time was never bishop of Canterbury thus entreated, for I am head of the Church of England, and am to you, Sir King, your ghostly father, and it was never God's law that the son should destroy his father which hath charge of his soul. And by your striving have you made all the bishops that should abide by the right of the church to be against holy church and me, and ye know well that I may not fight, but am ready to suffer death rather than I should consent to lose the right of holy church. Then said the king, Thou speakest as a proud clerk, but I shall abate thy pride ere I leave thee, for I must reckon with thee. Thou understandest well that thou wert my chancellor many years, and once I lent to thee £500 which thou never yet hast repaid, which I will that thou pay me again or else incontinent thou shalt go to prison. And then S. Thomas answered: Ye gave me that £500, and it is not fitting to demand that which ye have given. Notwithstanding he found surety for the said £500 and departed for that day. And after this, the next day the king demanded £30,000 that he had surmised on him to have stolen, he being chancellor, whereupon he desired day to answer; at which time he said that when he was archbishop

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he set him free therein without any claim or debt before good record, wherefore he ought not to answer unto that demand. And the bishops desired S. Thomas to obey the king but in no wise he would not agree to such things as should touch against the liberties of the church. And then they came to the king, and forsook S. Thomas, and agreed to all the king's desire, and the proper servants of S. Thomas fled from him and forsook him, and then poor people came and accompanied him. And on the night came to him two lords and told to him that the king's meiny had emprised to slay him. And the next night after he departed in the habit of a brother of Sempringham, and so chevissed that he went over sea.

And in the meanwhile certain bishops went to Rome for to complain on him to the pope, and the king sent letters to the king of France not to receive him. And the King Louis said that, though a man were banished and had committed there trespasses, yet should he be free in France. And so after when this holy S. Thomas came, he received him well, and gave him licence to abide there and do what he would. In this meanwhile the king of England sent certain lords unto the pope complaining on the Archbishop Thomas, which made grievous complaints, which when the pope had heard said, he would give none answer till that he had heard the Archbishop Thomas speak, which would hastily come thither. But they would not abide his coming, but departed without speeding of their intents, and came into England again. And anon after, S Thomas came to Rome on S. Mark's day at afternoon, and when his caterer should have bought fish for his dinner because it was fasting day, he could get none for

no money, and came and told to his lord S. Thomas so, and he bade him buy such as he could get, and then he bought flesh and made it ready for their dinner. And S. Thomas was served with a capon roasted, and his meiny with boiled meat. And so it was that the pope heard that he was come, and sent a cardinal to welcome him, and he found him at his dinner eating flesh, which anon returned and told to the pope how he was not so perfect a man as he had supposed, for contrary to the rule of the church he eateth this day flesh. The pope would not believe him, but sent another cardinal which for more evidence took the leg of the capon in his kerchief and affirmed the same, and opened his kerchief tofore the pope, and he found the leg turned into a fish called a carp. And when the pope saw it, he said, they were not true men to say such things of this good bishop. They said faithfully that it was flesh that he ate. After this S. Thomas came to the pope and did his reverence and obedience, whom the pope welcomed, and after communication he demanded him what meat he had eaten, and he said: Flesh as ye have heard tofore, because he could find no fish and very need compelled him thereto. Then the pope understood of the miracle that the capon's leg was turned into a carp, and of his goodness granted to him and to all them of the diocese of Canterbury licence to eat flesh ever after on S. Mark's day when it falleth on a fish day, and pardon withal, which is kept and accustomed unto this day. And then S. Thomas informed the pope how the king of England would have him consent to divers articles against the liberties of holy church, and what wrongs he did to the same, and that for to die he

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would never consent to them. And when the pope had heard him he wept for pity, and thanked God that he had such a bishop under him that had so well defended the liberties of holy church, and anon wrote out letters and bulls commanding all the bishops of Christendom to keep and observe the same. And then S. Thomas offered to the pope his bishopric up into the pope's hand, and his mitre with the cross and ring, and the pope commanded him to keep it still, and said he knew no man more able than he was. And after S. Thomas said mass tofore the pope in a white chasuble; and after mass he said to the pope that he knew by revelation that he should suffer death for the right of holy church, and when it should fall that chasuble should be turned from white into red. And after he departed from the pope and came down into France unto the abbey of Pontigny, and there he had knowledge that when the lords spiritual and temporal which had been at Rome were come home and had told the king that they might in no wise have their intent, that the king was greatly wroth, and anon banished all the kinsmen that were longing to S. Thomas that they should incontinent void his land, and made them swear that they should go to him and tell to him that for his sake they were exiled, and so they went over sea to him at Pontigny and he being there was full sorry for them. And after there was a great chapter in England of the monks of Citeaux and there the king desired them to write to Pontigny that they should no longer keep ne sustain Thomas the Archbishop, for if they did, he would destroy them of that order being in England. And, for fear thereof they wrote so over to Pontigny that he must depart thence with his kinsmen, and so he

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did, and was then full heavy, and remitted his cause to God. And anon after, the king of France sent to him that he should abide where it pleased him, and dwell in his realm, and he would pay for the costs of him and his kinsmen. And he departed and went to Sens, and the abbot brought him on the way. And S. Thomas told him how he knew by a vision that he should suffer death and martyrdom for the right of the church, and prayed him to keep it secret during his life. After this the king of England came into France, and there told the king how S. Thomas would destroy his realm, and then there told how he would foredo such laws as his elders had used tofore him, wherefore S. Thomas was sent for, and they were brought together. And the king of France laboured sore for to set them at accord, but it would not be, for that one would not minish his laws and accustoms, and S. Thomas would not grant that he should do contrary the liberties of holy church. And then the king of France held with the king of England against S. Thomas, and was wroth with him and commanded him to void his realm with all his kinsmen. And then S. Thomas wist not whither to go; but comforted his kinsmen as well as he might, and purposed to have gone in to Provence for to have begged his bread. And as he was going, the king of France sent for him again, and when he came he cried him mercy and said he had offended God and him, and bade him abide in his realm where he would, and he would pay for the dispenses of him and his kin. And in the meanwhile the king of England ordained his son king, and made him to be crowned by the Archbishop of York, and other bishops, which was against the statutes of the

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land, for the Archbishop of Canterbury should have consented and also have crowned him, wherefore S. Thomas gat a bull for to do accurse them that so did against him, and also on them that occupied the goods longing to him. And yet after this the king laboured so much that he accorded the king of England and S. Thomas which accord endured not long, for the king varied from it afterward. But S. Thomas, upon this accord, came home to Canterbury, where he was received worshipfully, and sent for them that had trespassed against him, and by the authority of the pope's bull openly denounced them accursed unto the time they come to amendment. And when they knew this they came to him and would have made him to assoil them by force; and sent word over to the king how he had done, whereof the king was much wroth and said: If he had men in his land that loved him they would not suffer such a traitor in his land alive.

And forthwith four knights took their counsel together and thought they would do to the king a pleasure, and emprised to slay S. Thomas, and suddenly departed and took their shipping towards England. And when the king knew of their departing he was sorry and sent after them, but they were on the sea and departed ere the messengers came, wherefore the king was heavy and sorry.

These be the names of the four knights: Sir Reginald Fitzurse, Sir Hugh de Morville, Sir William de Tracy, Sir Richard le Breton. On Christmas day S. Thomas made a sermon at Canterbury in his own church, and weeping, prayed the people to pray for him, for he knew well his time was nigh, and there executed the sentence on them

that were against the right of holy church. And that same day as the king sat at meat all the bread that he handled waxed anon mouldy and hoar, that no man might eat of it, and the bread that they touched not was fair and good for to eat. The Life of S. Thomas of Canterbury

And these four knights aforesaid came to Canterbury on the Tuesday in Christmas week about Evensong time, and came to S. Thomas and said that the king commanded him to make amends for the wrongs that he had done, and also that he should assoil all them that he had accursed anon, or else they should slay him. Then said Thomas: All that I ought to do by right, that will I with a good will do, but as to the sentence that is executed I may not undo, but that they will submit them to the correction of holy church, for it was done by our holy father the pope and not by me. Then said Sir Reginald: But if thou assoil the king and all other standing in the curse, it shall cost thee thy life. And S. Thomas said: Thou knowest well enough that the king and I were accorded on Mary Magdalene day, and that this curse should go forth on them that had offended the church.

Then one of the knights smote him as he kneeled before the altar on the head. And one Sir Edward Grim, that was his crossier put forth his arm with the cross to bear off the stroke, and the stroke smote the cross asunder and his arm almost off, wherefore he fled for fear, and so did all the monks, that were that time at compline. And then smote each at him, that they smote off a great piece of the skull of his head, that his brain fell on the pavement. And so they slew and martyred him, and were so cruel that one of them brake the point of his sword against the pavement.

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And thus this holy and blessed Archbishop S. Thomas suffered death in his own church for the right of all holy church. And when he was dead they stirred his brain, and after went in to his chamber and took away his goods, and his horse out of his stable, and took away his bulls and writings, and delivered them to Sir Robert Broke to bear into France to the king. And as they searched his chamber they found in a chest two shirts of hair made full of great knots, and then they said: Certainly he was a good man; and coming down into the churchward they began to dread and fear that the ground would not have borne them, and were marvellously aghast, but they supposed that the earth would have swallowed them all quick. And then they knew that they had done amiss. And anon it was known all about, how that he was martyred, and anon after took this holy body, and unclothed him, and found bishop's clothing above, and the habit of a monk under. And next his flesh he wore hard hair, full of knots, which was his shirt. And his breech was of the same, and the knots sticked fast within the skin, and all his body full of worms; he suffered great pain. And he was thus martyred the year of our Lord one thousand one hundred and seventy-one, and was fifty-three years old. And soon after tidings came to the king how he was slain, wherefore the king took great sorrow, and sent to Rome for his absolution.

Now after that S. Thomas departed from the pope, the pope would daily look upon the white chasuble that S. Thomas had said mass in, and the same day that he was martyred he saw it turned into red, whereby he knew well that that same day he suffered martyrdom for the right of holy church,

and commanded a mass of requiem solemnly to be sung for his soul. And when the quire began to sing requiem, an angel on high above began the office of a martyr: Letabitur justus, and then all the quire followed singing forth the mass of the office of a martyr. And the pope thanked God that it pleased him to show such miracles for his holy martyr, at whose tomb by the merits and prayers of this holy martyr our blessed Lord hath showed many miracles. The blind have recovered their sight, the dumb their speech, the deaf their hearing, the lame their limbs, and the dead their life. If I should here express all the miracles that it hath pleased God to show for this holy saint it should contain a whole volume, therefore at this time, I pass over unto the feast of his translation, where I propose with the grace of God to recite some of them. Then let us pray to this glorious martyr to be our advocate, that by his petition we may come to everlasting bliss. Amen.

The Life of S. Silvester

Here followeth the Life of S. Silvester.
The interpretation of his name.

Silvester is said of sile or sol which is light, and of terra the earth, as who saith the light of the earth, that is of the church. Or Silvester is said of silvas and of trahens, that is to say he was drawing wild men and hard unto the faith. Or as it is said in glossario, Silvester is to say green, that is to wit, green in contemplation of heavenly things, and a toiler in labouring himself; he was umbrous or shadowous. That is to say he was cold and refrigate from all concupiscence of the flesh, full of boughs among the trees of heaven. Eusebius of

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Cæsarea compiled his legend, which the blessed Blasius in the counsel of seventy bishops recordeth, like as it is had in the decree.

Of the Life of S. Silvester.

Silvester was son of one Justa and was learned and taught of a priest named Cyrinus, which did marvellously great alms and made hospitalities. It happed that he received a christian man into his house named Timothy, who no man would receive for the persecution of tyrants, wherefore the said Timothy suffered death and passion after that year whilst he preached justly the faith of Jesu Christ. It was so that the prefect Tarquinius supposed that Timothy had had great plenty of riches, which he demanded of Silvester, threatening him to the death but if he delivered them to him. And when he found certainly that Timothy had no great riches, he commanded to S. Silvester to make sacrifice to the idols, and if he did not he would make him suffer divers torments. S. Silvester answered: False, evil man, thou shalt die this night, and shalt have torments that ever shall endure, and thou shalt know, whether thou wilt or not, that he whom we worship is very God. Then S. Silvester was put in prison, and the provost went to dinner. Now it happed that as he ate, a bone of a fish turned in his throat and stuck fast, so that he could neither have it down ne up, and at midnight died like as S. Silvester had said, and then S. Silvester was delivered out of prison. He was so gracious that all christian men and paynims loved him, for he was fair like an angel to look on, a fair speaker, whole of body, holy in work, good in counsel, patient and charitable, and

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firmly established in the faith. He had in writing the names of all the widows and orphans that were poor, and to them he administered their necessity. He had a custom to fast all Fridays and Saturdays. And it was so that Melchiades, the bishop of Rome, died, and all the people chose S. Silvester for to be the high Bishop of Rome, which sore against his will was made pope. He instituted for to be fasted Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, and the Thursday for to be hallowed as Sunday.

Now it happed that the Emperor Constantine did do slay all the christian men over all where he could find them, and for this cause S. Silvester fled out of the town with his clerks and hid him in a mountain. And for the cruelty of Constantine God sent him such a sickness that he became lazar and measel, and by the counsel of his physicians he got three thousand young children for to have cut their throats, for to have their blood in a bath all hot, and thereby he might be healed of his measelry. And when he should ascend into his chariot for to go to the place where he should be bathed, the mothers of the children came crying and braying for sorrow of their children, and when he understood that they were mothers of the children, he had great pity on them and said to his knights and them that were about him: The dignity of the empire of Rome is brought forth of the fountain of pity, the which hath stablished by decree that who that slayeth a child in battle shall have his head smitten off, then should it be great cruelty to us for to do to ours such thing as we defend to strange nations, for so should cruelty surmount us. It is better that we leave cruelty and that pity surmount us, and therefore me seemeth better

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to save the lives of these innocents, than by their death I should have again my health, of the which we be not yet certain. Ne we may recover nothing for to slay them, for if so were that I should thereby have health, that should be a cruel health that should be bought with the death of so many innocents. Then he commanded to render and deliver again to the mothers their children, and gave to every each of them a good gift, and thus made them return to their houses with great joy, from whence they departed with great sorrow, and he himself returned again in his chariot unto his palace. Now it happed that the night after S. Peter and S. Paul appeared to this Emperor Constantine, saying to him: Because thou hast had horror to shed and spill the blood of innocents, our Lord Jesu Christ hath had pity on thee, and commandeth thee to send unto such a mountain where Silvester is hid with his clerks, and say to him that thou comest for to be baptized of him and thou shalt be healed of thy malady. And when he was awaked he did do call his knights and commanded them to go to that mountain and bring the Pope Silvester to him courteously and fair, for to speak with him. When S. Silvester saw from far the knights come to him, he supposed they sought him for to be martyred, and began to say to his clerks that they should be firm and stable in the faith for to suffer martyrdom. When the knights came to him they said to him much courteously that Constantine sent for him, and prayed him that he would come and speak with him. And forthwith he came, and when they had intersaluted each other, Constantine told to him his vision. And when Silvester demanded of him what men they were that so appeared to him, the emperor wist not ne could

not name them. S. Silvester opened a book wherein the images of S. Peter and S. Paul were pourtrayed, and demanded of him if they were like unto them. Then Constantine anon knew them, and said that he had seen them in his sleep. Then S. Silvester preached to him the faith of Jesu Christ, and baptized him; and when he was baptized, a great light descended upon him so that he said that he had seen Jesu Christ, and was healed forthwith of his measelry. And then he ordained seven laws unto holy church, the first was that all the city should worship Jesu Christ as very God, the second thing was that whosoever should say any villainy of Jesu Christ he should be punished, the third, whosomever should do villainy to christian men, he should lose half his goods. The fourth, that the bishop of Rome should be chief of all holy church, like as the emperor is chief of all the world. The fifth, that who that had done or should do trespass and fled to the church, that he should be kept there free from all injury. The sixth, that no man should edify any churches without licence of holy church and consent of the bishop. The seventh, that the dime and tenth part of the possessions should be given to the church. After this the emperor came to S. Peter's church and confessed meekly all his sins tofore all people, and what wrong he had done to christian men, and made to dig and cast out to make the foundements for the churches, and bare on his shoulders twelve hods or baskets full of earth. When Helen, the mother of Constantine, dwelling in Bethany, heard say that the emperor was become christian, she sent to him a letter, in which she praised much her son of this that he had renounced the false idols, but she blamed him much

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that he had renounced the law of the Jews, and worshipped a man crucified. Then Constantine remanded to his mother that she should assemble the greatest masters of the Jews, and he should assemble the greatest masters of the christian men, to the end that they might dispute and know which was the truest law. Then Helen assembled twelve masters which she brought with her, which were the wisest that they might find in that law, and S. Silvester and his clerks were of that other party. Then the emperor ordained two paynims, gentiles, to be their judges, of whom that one was named Crato, and that other Zenophilus, which were proved wise and expert, and they to give the sentence, and be judge of the disputation. Then began one of the masters of the Jews for to maintain and dispute his law, and S. Silvester and his clerks answered to his disputation, and to them all, always concluding them by scripture. The judges which were true and just, held more of the party of S. Silvester than of the Jews. Then said one of the masters of the Jews named Zambry, I marvel, said he, that ye be so wise and incline you to their words, let us leave all these words and go we to the effect of the deeds. Then he did do come a cruel bull, and said a word in his ear, and anon the bull died. Then the people were all against Silvester. Then said Silvester, believe not thou that he hath named in the ear the name of Jesu Christ, but the name of some devil, know ye verily it is no great strength to slay a bull, for a man, or a lion, or a serpent may well slay him, but it is great virtue to raise him again to life, then if he may not raise him it is by the devil. And if he may raise him again to life, I shall believe that he is dead by the power of God. And when the

judges heard this, they said to Zambry, that had slain the bull, that he should raise him again. Then he answered that if Sylvester might raise him in the name of Jesus of Galilee his master, then he would believe in him, and thereto bound them all the Jews that were there. And S. Silvester first made his orisons and prayers to our Lord, and sith came to the bull and said to him in his ear: Thou cursed creature that art entered into this bull and hast slain him, go out in the name of Jesu Christ, in whose name I command thee bull, arise thou up and go thou with the other beasts debonairly, and anon the bull arose and went forth softly. Then the queen and the judges, which were paynims, were converted to the faith. **The Life of S. Silvester**

In this time it happed that there was at Rome a dragon in a pit, which every day slew with his breath more than three hundred men. Then came the bishops of the idols unto the emperor and said unto him: O thou most holy emperor, sith the time that thou hast received christian faith the dragon which is in yonder foss or pit slayeth every day with his breath more than three hundred men. Then sent the emperor for S. Silvester and asked counsel of him of this matter. S. Silvester answered that by the might of God he promised to make him cease of his hurt and blessure of this people. Then S. Silvester put himself to prayer, and S. Peter appeared to him and said: Go surely to the dragon and the two priests that be with thee take in thy company, and when thou shalt come to him thou shalt say to him in this manner: Our Lord Jesu Christ which was born of the Virgin Mary, crucified, buried and arose, and now sitteth on the right side of the Father, this is he that shall come to deem and judge the living and the dead, I com-

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mand thee Sathanas that thou abide him in this place till he come. Then thou shalt bind his mouth with a thread, and seal it with thy seal, wherein is the imprint of the cross. Then thou and the two priests shall come to me whole and safe, and such bread as I shall make ready for you ye shall eat. Thus as S. Peter had said, S. Silvester did. And when he came to the pit, he descended down one hundred and fifty steps, bearing with him two lanterns, and found the dragon, and said the words that S. Peter had said to him, and bound his mouth with the thread, and sealed it, and after returned, and as he came upward again he met with two enchanters which followed him for to see if he descended, which were almost dead of the stench of the dragon, whom he brought with him whole and sound, which anon were baptized, with a great multitude of people with them. Thus was the city of Rome delivered from double death, that was from the culture and worshipping of false idols, and from the venom of the dragon. At the last when S. Silvester approached towards his death, he called to him the clergy and admonished them to have charity, and that they should diligently govern their churches, and keep their flock from the wolves. And after the year of the incarnation of our Lord three hundred and twenty, he departed out of this world and slept in our Lord, etc.

Here followeth the Life of S. Paul the first Hermit.

S. Paul which was the first hermit as S. Jerome writeth, was in the time of Decius and Valerianus, emperors, the year of the incarnation of our Lord

two hundred and fifty-six. This holy man, S. Paul, saw men for christian faith cruelly tormented, wherefore he fled into the desert. Among whom he saw two cruelly tormented. The first for that he abode firmly in his faith, the judge did do anoint all his body with honey and did do bind his hands behind him on his back, and so did him be set in the heat of the sun for to be bitten and stung of flies and wasps; that other that was young he made him to be in a right soft bed between two sheets, among flowers and delectable roses and herbs sweet smelling, and therein he was bounden so that he might not move him. After, he made an harlot, a ribald, come to him alone for to touch his members and his body, to move to lechery. Finally, when the voluptuosity of his flesh surmounted him, and he might not defend himself ne his members, he bit off a piece of his tongue and spit it in her visage, which always enticed him to lechery by touching and by kissings, and so he voided the temptation fleshly, and the ribauld also, and deserved to have laud and victory. In this time S. Paul, tofore said, was young, about sixteen years of age, and dwelt in Thebaid which is a part of Egypt, with his sister Maurice. And when he saw the persecutions of christian men, he departed and became an hermit so long and so many years, that he was old one hundred and thirteen years. In this time S. Anthony was a hermit in another desert and was then ninety years of age. And on a time he thought in himself that in the world was none so good ne so great an hermit as he was himself. Hereupon came to him a revelation as he slept that, beneath all, low down in that desert was an hermit better than he, and that he ought to go and see this holy man. Anon after the next day

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The Life of S. Paul the first Hermit

he took his staff by which he sustained him, and began to go through that desert, and it happed that he met a person which was half above, an horse, and beneath, a man whom the fables of the poets call centaurs. And anon made tofore him the sign of the cross, and demanded of him where this holy man the hermit dwelt, and he showed to him the way on the right ride, and anon vanished away from him. It is not certainly known if this beast was a beast of the desert or the devil in figure of a beast. After this, S. Anthony met with a monster in a valley bearing the fruit of a palm-tree crooked, and had in his forehead horns, and his legs and feet like a goat of the woods, and anon he made tofore him the sign of the cross. This beastial man gave to S. Anthony the fruit of the palm-tree, and S. Anthony demanded what he was, and he answered: I am mortal and dwell in desert, and the Saracens call us Sacraros. I am the messenger of our company, we pray thee that thou pray the Lord for us. We know well that the Saviour of the world is come, and his renown is spread through the world. And because hereof no man shall have doubtance, all men know that in the time of Constantine the emperor, such a man was brought into the city of Alexandria tofore the people, and when he was dead his body was filled with salt against the heat of the sun, and was sent to the emperor to Antioch for a marvel. But return we to our matter: S. Anthony had great labour in going by the desert whereas was no way. Finally he found a she-wolf which brought him by the will of God unto the hermitage of S. Paul, but as soon as he knew that S. Anthony came, hastily he shut his door. And S. Anthony prayed him for charity that he would open it to him, and said:

Thou wottest well who and wherefore I am come, I know well I am not worthy to render and give to thee anything for thy labour, nevertheless I shall not depart from hence unto the time that I have seen thee. At the last he opened his door, and sith interembraced each other, and each of them did reverence each to other. And S. Paul demanded of the estate of the world and of the governance, and if christian faith were spread and used over all. And whiles they were thus talking a crow came flying and brought to them two loaves of bread; and when the crow was gone S. Paul said: Be thou glad and joyful, for our Lord is debonair and merciful, he hath sent us bread for to eat. It is forty years passed that every day he hath sent me half a loaf, but now at thy coming he hath sent two whole loaves, and double provender. And they had question together until evensong time which of them both should entame or begin to take of the bread. At the last the bread departed even between their hands, and then they ate, and drank of the well or fountain. After graces said they had all that night collation together. On the morn said S. Paul: Brother, it is long sith that I knew that thou dwelledst in this region and in this country, and God had promised to me thy company, I shall now shortly die and shall go to Jesu Christ for to receive the crown to me promised, thou art come hither for to bury my body. When S. Anthony heard that, anon he began tenderly to weep, and wailed, praying that he might die with him and go in his company. S. Paul said: It is need yet that thou live for thy brethren, to the end that they by the ensample of thee be made firm and taught; wherefore I pray thee return to thine abbey and bring to me the

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mantle which Athanasius the bishop gave to thee for to wrap in my body. Then S. Anthony marvelled of this, that he knew of this bishop and of this mantle, and after durst nothing say, but did to him reverence, like as God had spoken to him, and weeping kissed his feet and his hands and came again to his abbey with great travail and labour, for he had from that one part to that other many journeys and foul way, through hayes and hedges, woods, stones, hills and valleys, and S. Anthony of great age and feeble of fasting, and not strong ne mighty.

When he was come to his abbey, two of his disciples, to him most secret, demanded of him saying: Fair father, where have ye been so long? And he answered: Alas! I, wretched sinner, which bear falsely the name to be a monk, I have seen Eli the prophete, I have seen John the Baptist in desert, and certes I have seen S. Paul in Paradise. Thus speaking and beating his breast he brought the mantle out of his cell, and all stilly without more words, he went again the long way all alone through the desert unto S. Paul the hermit, having great desire to see him, for he was afeard lest he should die ere he might come again to him. It happed in the second journey, where S. Anthony went through the desert the third hour of the day, he saw the soul of S. Paul, shining, ascend into heaven among a great company of angels, of prophets, and also of apostles, and anon he fell down to the earth weeping and wailing, and crying with a high voice: Alas, Paul! wherefore leavest thou me so soon, which have so little seen thee? Then he had so great desire to see the corpse or body that he passed all the remnant of his way as soon as a

bird flying, like as he was wont to tell and rehearse, and when he came to the cell of S. Paul he found that the body was right up on his knees, and the visage and hands addressed towards heaven, and supposed he had been alive and had made his prayers, but when he had advised it, he knew well that he was passed out of this world. What weepings and what wailings he made upon the body it were a piteous thing to hear; among all other he said: O holy soul, thy body showeth in death this that thou didst in thy life. After this he was much abashed how he should bury the body, for he had no instrument to make his sepulchre; then came two lions which much debonairly made a pit after the quantity of his body, and S. Anthony buried his body therein. And he took with him the coat of S. Paul which was made and fastened together with the leaves of a palm-tree, in manner of a mat, and afterward, for great reverence, S. Anthony ware this coat and clad him withal in great and solemn feasts. Thus this holy man S. Paul died in the year of the incarnation of our Lord two hundred and eighty-eight. Let us then pray to him that he impetre and get us remission of our sins, that after this life we may come to everlasting joy and bliss in heaven. Amen.

The Life of S. Remigius

Here followeth of S. Remigius, and first the interpretation of his name.

Remigius is said of remi, that is to say feeding, and geos, that is earth, as who saith feeding the earthly people with doctrine. Or of geon, that is a wrestler, for he was a pastor and a wrestler, he fed his flock with the word of preaching,

The Life of S. Remigius

with suffrages of praying, and with example of conversation. There is three manner of armour that is for the defence, the shield, for to fight, the sword, for his salvation and health, the habergeon and helm. He wrestled against the devil with the shield of faith, with the sword of the word of God, and with the helmet of hope. Ignatius Archbishop of Rheims wrote his life.

Of the Life of S. Remigius.

Remigius, an holy doctor, and confessor glorious of our Lord, was tofore his birth provided of our Lord, and foreseen of a holy hermit. When the persecution of the Vandals had almost wasted and destroyed nigh all France, there was a man recluse, holy and virtuous, which had lost his sight, which oft prayed to our Lord for peace and welfare of the church of France. He had on a time a vision, and him seemed an angel came to him and said: Know thou that the woman that thou knowest named Aline shall bring forth a son that shall be named Remigius, which shall deliver all the country from this persecution. And when he awoke he came to the house of this Aline and told to her his vision, and she would not believe it because of her age. The recluse said: It shall be so as I have said, and when thou hast given thy child suck, thou shalt give to me of thy milk, to put upon mine eyes, and therewith I shall be whole and recover my sight again. And like as he said all these things happened. And the woman had a child named Remigius, which when he came to the age of discretion, he fled the world, and entered into a reclusage. And sith after, for the great renown of his holy life, when he had been

twenty-two years therein he was elect and chosen to be Archbishop of Rheims. He was so debonair that little birds came and ate on his table and took meat at his hand. It happed on a day that he was lodged in an house of a good woman which had but a little wine in her tonnel or vessel, and S. Remigius went in to the cellar and made the sign of the cross upon the ton, and prayed a while. Anon the ton was so full that it leapt over, by the merits of the good saint. **The Life of S. Remigius**

Now it happed that Clodovius the king of France, which was a paynim, might not be converted for any preaching that his wife might do, which was a christian woman, unto the time that a great host of Alemans came into France. Then by the admonishment of his wife he made a vow that if the God that his wife worshipped would give him victory, he would be baptized at his returning from the battle. Thus, as he demanded, he vanquished the battle, and after came to Rheims to S. Remigius and prayed him that he would christen him. And when S. Remigius baptized him he had no chrisom ready, then a dove descended from heaven which brought the chrisom in an ampull of which the king was anointed and this ampull is kept in the church of S. Remigius at Rheims, of which the kings of France be anointed when they be crowned. S. Remigius had a niece which was married to a clerk named Genebaldus, which by devotion left his wife for to enter into religion. Then S. Remigius saw that the see of Rheims was over great, and ordained a see of a bishopric at Laon and made Genebald first bishop of that place. When Genebald was bishop his wife came thither to see him, and he remembered of the privity that they were wont to have together,

The Life of S. Remigius

and lay on a night with her, and engendered on her a child. When his wife knew that she was great and let him have knowledge thereof, and when he wist that it was a son, he commanded that it should be named Thief, because he had engendered it by theft. After for to quench the suspicion and the words of the people, he suffered that his wife should come to him as she did tofore, and anon after she conceived a daughter, whom he commanded to name a fox's whelp, and after came to S. Remigius and confessed him of his sin, and took the stole off his neck and would leave his bishopric, but S. Remigius, after he had confessed him, comforted him, and gave him penance, and shut him in a little cell seven years long, and gave to him bread and water, and in the meanwhile he governed the church himself. At the end of seven years an angel came to the prison, and said to him that he had done well his penance, and bade him go out of the prison. To whom he said: I may not go out, for my lord S. Remigius hath closed the door and sealed it. And the angel said to him: Know thou that the door of heaven is opened to thee; I shall open this door without breaking of the seal which S. Remigius hath sealed. And anon the door was opened. Then Genebald fell down in the midst of the door in manner of a cross, and said: If our Lord Jesu Christ came hither I shall not go out but if S. Remigius, which shut and closed me herein, come and bring me out. And then the angel went anon and fetched S. Remigius and brought him to Laon, and he delivered him out of prison, and remised him and set him again in his see there, where he lived after, all the days of his life, holily. After his death, Thief his son was made bishop

after him, which is also a saint in heaven, and at the last S. Remigius, after that God had shown many miracles for him, he departed out of this life unto everlasting joy the year of the incarnation of our Lord five hundred. The Life of S. Hilary

Here followeth the Life of S. Hilary.
The interpretation of his name.

Hilary is said of joyousness, for he was joyous in the service of God. Or Hilary is said virtuous and high, for he was high and strong in science, and virtuous in his life. Or Hilary is said of hilum, which is to say dark matter, for he had in his dictes great obscurity and profoundness.

Of the Life of S. Hilary.

S. Hilary, which was Bishop of Poictiers, was born in the country of Guienne. He had a wife wedded, and a daughter, and whereas he was in habit secular he lived after the life of a monk. He profited so much in holy life and sciences that he was chosen Archbishop of Poictiers. A manner of an heresy reigned in his country and through all France, which was the sect of the Arians, the which he destroyed to his power. Nevertheless by the commandment of the emperor, which was of the party of the heretics, by the suggestion of two bishops of that sect he was exiled, with which two bishops he disputed, and overcame them. Afterward, for they might not gainsay the truth of the matter, ne could not bear ne answer to his eloquence, so that he was constrained to come again to Poictiers. And as he passed by an isle of the sea, which was full of

The Life of S. Hilary

serpents, he chased them away by the virtue of his commandment, and by his sight only, and pight a staff in the middle of the isle and gave to the serpents liberty to come to that staff and not to pass farther, and the serpents obeyed him, which part is no land now but sea.

When S. Hilary came to Poictiers he met a child dead, borne for to be buried, and the child was not baptized; which child by virtue of his prayer he raised to life, for he lay long in the dust in prayer, and when he arose out of his prayer the child arose from death to life.

S. Hilary had a daughter named Apia and she would have been married, but S. Hilary preached to her so much of the estate of virginity that she changed her purpose. And when she was confirmed in this will and purpose S. Hilary doubted that she should change, and prayed our Lord for to take her while she was in good purpose, and anon she died, and S. Hilary buried her. And when her mother the wife of S. Hilary saw that her daughter was dead, she prayed to her husband, that he should impetre and get for her like as he had done for his daughter. And anon as S. Hilary had made his orison, she died, and by this manner he sent tofore him his wife and his daughter.

In this time the pope Leo, which favoured heresy, called a counsel of bishops, but he sent not for S. Hilary that he should come thereto, notwithstanding S. Hilary came thither. When the pope saw him come, he commanded that no man should arise against him, ne give him no place. Then said the pope to him: Thou art Hilary the cock, and not the son of an hen. And Hilary answered: I am Hilary and no

cock, but a bishop in Gallia that is in France. Then said the pope, Thou art Hilary Gallus, and I am Leo of the Papal See, Judge. To whom Hilary said: If thou be Leo yet art thou not of the Tribe of Judah. Then the pope had great indignation and said to him: Abide thou a little, and I shall pay to thee thine hire; and S. Hilary answered: And if thou come not again who shall pay me for thee? And the pope answered: I shall come again and shall beat down thy pride. Then the pope went down into the low chamber for to ease him, and by the conduit of his nether part voided out all the entrails of his body, and so died suddenly. Thus then as he abode the pope S. Hilary found no place to sit on, ne none would remove to make him place, and when he saw that, he said: Domini est terra, the earth longeth to our Lord, and sat down upon the earth, and the earth arose up by miracle by the will of our Lord, in such wise that he sat as high as the other, and anon after, word came that the pope was dead. Then S. Hilary confirmed all the other bishops that were there in the faith, and so confirmed, each went in to his country.

The Life of S. Hilary

In the end, when S. Hilary had impetred of God many miracles to be showed by his prayer, he became sick, and saw his death approach. Then he called to him one of his chaplains whom he much loved and said to him: Go thou out and bring to me word what thou hearest. When he had been long without, he came in and told to S. Hilary that he had heard a great noise in the city; and when it was midnight he sent his chaplain again to hearken as he had done tofore; and when he came again in to the chamber for to tell that he had heard nothing, a great clear light

The Invention of S. Firmin

entered in, that the priest might not behold it. And when the light departed S. Hilary died, that was the year of grace three hundred and forty, let us pray to him that he pray for us. Amen.

And next followeth the Invention of S. Firmin.

In the time of the invention of S Firmin the martyr, was S. Savin, bishop of Amiens, and saw that tofore him in the time of S. Honor, our Lord had done take up the bodies of S. Fulcian, S. Victorice, and S. Gentian, and thought all an whole night upon the body of S. Firmin the martyr. And when it was day this holy man S. Savin summoned the clergy and the people to fast and make prayers through the city of Amiens, to the end that our Lord would show them the place where the body of S. Firmin the martyr lay. And on the third day our Lord sent such a miracle that he sent a ray of the sun, which pierced the wall of the monastery on the same place where the body lay. Then they began to dig and delve there, and when they came nigh the body, there issued out so great a sweetness out of the pit, that all they that were there weened they had been in Paradise. And it seemed that if all the spices of the world had been stamped together it should not have smelled so well ne so sweet, and this sweet odour spread through the city of Amiens and divers cities about, that is to wit Therouanne, Cambray and Noyon. And the people of these cities moved them each from his place with candles and offerings, without sayer or commander, but for the odour that so spread, and came unto this glorious saint. And as the

The Invention of S. Firmin

body was borne in the city of Amiens, there were showed such miracles that never none were like found ne seen tofore of any saint, for the elements moved them by the miracle of this saint; the snow that was that time great on the earth was turned into powder and dust by the heat that was then, and the ice that hung on the trees became flowers and leaves, and the meadows about Amiens flowered and became green, and the sun which by his nature should go low, that day ascended as high as she is on S. John's day at noon in the summer. And as men bare the body of this saint the trees inclined and worshipped the body, and all manner sick men, of what malady they had, they received health in the invention of the blessed body of S. Firmin. And the burgesses that were in their gowns and mantles had so great heat that they called their servants and bond men, of whom there were many that day in Amiens, and affranchised them for to bear their clothes into the city of Amiens. Our Lord did do show such miracles, and so far sent the odour that the lord of Beaugency which was at a window and was sick of lazary, smelled the odour and was anon guerished and whole. And he took his gold and came and did homage unto the body of S. Firmin in the city of Amiens. Our Lord hath showed many miracles for this glorious saint, and much he ought to be honoured in this world, and then pray we unto this blessed saint, S. Firmin, that he pray for us to our Lord that he will pardon us our sins, and octroy and grant to us the glory of heaven. Amen.

The Life of S. Macarius

Here followeth the Life of S. Macarius, and first the interpretation of his name.

Macarius is said of macha, which is as much to say as engine, and of ares, which is to say virtue. Or Macarius is said of macha, that is to say smiting, and of rio, that is to say master, for he was ingenious against the fallacy of the devil, virtuous of life, smiting in chastening his body, and master in the governance of prelacy.

S. Macarius was in a desert, and entered in to a pit or sepulchre, whereas had been buried many bodies of paynims, for to sleep, and he drew out one of these bodies and laid it under his head instead of a pillow. Then came thither devils for to make him aghast and afeard, and said one to another: Come with me to bathe thee. And the body that lay under his head said: I may not come, for I have a pilgrim upon me lying, that I may not move. For all this S. Macarius was not afeard, but he beat the body with his fist, and said: Arise and go if thou mayst. When the devils saw that they might not make him afeard they cried with a great voice: Macarius, thou hast vanquished and overcome us twice. On a time as Macarius was nigh his house, the devil came with a great scythe on his neck, and would have smitten therewith S. Macarius, and the devil said to him: Thou dost to me great violence and force for I may not prevail against thee. Lo! what thou doest I do, thou fastest and I eat not, thou wakest and I never sleep, but there is one thing in which thou overcomest me, and Macarius said: What is that? To whom the devil said: That is humility, and thy meekness by which I may not prevail against thee.

The Life of S. Macarius

It happed on a time that a great temptation came upon S. Macarius, and much tempted him, and anon he filled a sack full of stones, and laid it on his neck and bare it many journeys together through the desert. Then another hermit met him and demanded him why he bare so great a burden, and he answered: I travail my body because it suffereth not me in peace, and thus I vex him that vexed me. This holy abbot S. Macarius saw passing tofore him a devil in the habit of a man, which was the clothing of a herald, all linen full of holes, and in every hole hung a phial, and he demanded him whither he went. The devil answered him, I go for to give drink unto these hermits, then demanded him, S. Macarius, wherefore he bare so many phials. And he answered: I shall offer to them one, and if he may not drink of that one, I shall proffer him another, and so the third, and of all the other, each after other, until they may find something pleasant to them for to fall into temptation. And when he came again, S. Macarius called him, and demanded him what he had found, and he answered that he had evil sped, for they were all so holy and blessed that they recked not of his drink, save one only which is named Theodistus. Then S. Macarius arose and came to these hermits, and found them all in good point save him whom the devil had tempted. Then S. Macarius did so much by his exhortation that he brought him again in the right way. Another time S. Macarius met the devil and demanded him whence he came, and the devil answered: I come from visiting thy brethren, then said S. Macarius: How do they? The devil answered: Evil. And he asked wherefore, and the devil

The Life of S. Macarius

said: For they be all holy, and that worst is, there was one that was mine, and I have lost him, for he is now made holier than the others. When S. Macarius heard this he gave laudings and thankings to God. It happed on a time S. Macarius found in his way the head of a dead man, and he demanded of it whose head it was, and the head answered: Of a paynim, and Macarius said to him: Where is thy soul? He answered: In hell; and he demanded if it were deep in hell, and he said: Deeper than is from heaven to earth. And after he demanded if there were any beneath him, and he said the Jews be lower than he was; he asked if there were any lower or beneath the Jews; to whom he said that the false christian men be yet lower and deeper in hell than the Jews, for as much as they have despited and villained the blood of Jesu Christ of which they were redeemed, so much the more be they tormented.

On a time S. Macarius went in a desert and at the end of every mile he set a reed in the earth for to have knowledge thereby to turn again, and went forth nine days' journey, and after, he slept. And the devil took all these reeds and bound them and laid them at his head, wherefore he had great labour for to come again into his house. An hermit which was in desert was much tempted for to go again to the world, and he thought in his heart that he should do more good to be among the people than he should do in his hermitage. Then he told all this to S. Macarius, and S. Macarius said to him: Thus shalt thou say to thy thoughts, that for the love of Jesu Christ I keep the walls of this cell.

It happed on a time that S. Macarius killed a

fly that bit him, and when he saw the blood of this fly, he repented him, and so, repentant of that, would revenge it, and anon unclothed him and went naked in the desert six months, and suffered himself to be bitten of the flies. After this S. Macarius when he had long lived, and God had showed many miracles for him, and had flowered in many virtues, he died and rendered his soul unto our Lord Jesu Christ, qui est benedictus in secula seculorum. Amen.

The Life of S. Felix

Here beginneth the Life of S. Felix, said Inpincis

Felix was surnamed Inpincis, and is said of the place where he resteth, or of the pointelles of greffes. A greffe is properly called a pointel to write in tables of wax, by which he suffered death. And some say that he was a schoolmaster and taught children, and was to them much rigorous. After he was known of the paynims, and because he confessed plainly that he was christian and believed in Jesu Christ he was delivered to be tormented into the hands of the children his scholars, whom he had taught and learned, which scholars slew him with their pointelles, pricks, and greffes, and yet the church holdeth him for no martyr but for a confessor. And the paynims said to him that he should do sacrifice to the idols, but he blew on them and anon they fell to the earth. It is read in a legend that when Maximus, bishop of Nola, and Valerian, fled the persecution of the paynims, the bishop was tormented with hunger and thirst so much that he fell down to the ground, wherefore Felix was sent of an angel to him, and he bare nothing

The Life of S. Felix

with him for to give to him, and he saw by him a cluster of raisins hanging on a tree, which he laid on his shoulders hastily, and bare it with him. And when the bishop was dead Felix was elected and chosen to be bishop. And as he preached on a time the persecutors sought him, and he hid him in the clefts of a broken wall, and incontinent by the will of God came spincops and made their work and nets before him that they might not find him. And when the tyrants could not find him they went their way, and he went thence and came to the house of a widow, and took there his refection of her three months, and yet he saw her never in the visage. And at last when the peace was made he went him in to his church and there died and rested in our Lord and was buried by the city in a place that was called Pincis.

And this Felix had a brother which was in likewise named Felix, and when this Felix was constrained to adore the idols he said: Ye be enemies unto your gods, for if ye bring me to them like as my brother did, and they shall fall to the earth and break.

On a time this Felix did do labour his garden where he had set coles and worts for his use, and some of his neighbours would have stolen away these coles and worts, and hoed in the garden all the night and digged, and on the morning S. Felix saluted them, and anon they confessed their sin, and he pardoned them and then they went their way.

And a little while after the paynims came for to take S. Felix, and anon so great dolour and pain took them that they began to howl as dogs. And he said to them: Believe ye in God and say ye

that Jesu Christ is very God, and do you to be baptized, and ye shall be whole, and your pain shall cease, and so they did, and anon they were all whole. And after, the bishop of the idols came to him and said: Sire, as soon as our God saw thee he fled, and when I said Why fleest thou? he said: I may not suffer the virtue of Felix, and when my God doubteth thee, much more I ought to doubt thee, and when Felix had confirmed him in the faith he baptized him. And Felix said to them that adored Apollo: If Apollo be very God, let him say to me what I hold in my hand. And he had in his hand a schedule wherein was written the orison of our Lord, that is the Paternoster. And he might not answer, wherefore the paynims were converted to our Lord. And at last when he had sung his mass and the peace given to the people, he fell down in prayer upon the pavement of the church and passed out of this life unto our Lord.

The Life of S. Marcel

Here followeth the Life of S. Marcel and the interpretation of his name.

Marcel is as much to say as denying to do evil, or it is said as smiting the seas, that is to say the adversities of the world, for the world resembleth the sea. For like as Chrysostom saith upon Matthew: Continual dread is his confuse, and always in the sea is continual dread, the image of death and perpetual disordinance without ceasing.

Of S. Marcel.

S. Marcel was chief bishop and pope of Rome. He went to chastise and reprove Maximian the

The Life of S. Anthony

emperor of this, that he was over cruel to christian people. And the emperor had of him so great despite that he made of the house of a good woman, of which S. Marcel had made a church, the said emperor made it a stable for horses, and in the place where S. Marcel had sung mass, the emperor made him to keep his horse, in which service S. Marcel was all his life after, and in that service S. Marcel died holily the year of the incarnation of our Lord two hundred and four score and seven.

Here followeth of S. Anthony, and first the interpretation of his name.

Anthony is said of Ana, which is as much to say as high, and tenens that is holding, which is as much as to say as holding high things and despising the world. He despised the world and said: It is deceiving, transitory and bitter, and Athanasius wrote his life.

Of the Life of S. Anthony.

S. Anthony was born in Egypt of good and religious father and mother, and when he was but twenty years old, he heard on a time in the church read in the gospel, that said: If thou wilt be perfect go sell all that thou hast and give it to poor men; and then according thereto he sold all that he had, and gave it to the poor people and became an hermit. He had overmany temptations of the devil. Then on a time when he had overcome the spirit of fornication which tempted him therein by the virtue of his faith, the devil came to him in the form of a little child all black, and fell

down at his feet and confessed that he was the devil of fornication, which S. Anthony had desired and prayed to see him, for to know him that so tempted young people. Then said S. Anthony: Sith I have perceived that thou art so foul a thing I shall never doubt thee. **The Life of S. Anthony**

After, he went into a hole or cave to hide him, and anon he found there a great multitude of devils, that so much beat him that his servant bare him upon his shoulders in to his house as he had been dead. When the other hermits were assembled and wept his death, and would have done his service, suddenly S. Anthony revived and made his servant to bear him into the pit again where the devils had so evil beaten him, and began to summon the devils again, which had beaten him, to battles. And anon they came in form of divers beasts wild and savage, of whom that one howled, another siffled, and another cried, and another brayed and assailed S. Anthony, that one with the horns, the others with their teeth, and the others with their paws and ongles, and disturned, and all to-rent his body that he supposed well to die. Then came a clear brightness, and all the beasts fled away, and S. Anthony understood that in this great light our Lord came, and he said twice: Who art thou? The good Jesu answered: I am here, Anthony. Then said S. Anthony: O good Jesu! where hast thou been so long? why wert thou not here with me at the beginning to help me and to heal my wounds? Then our Lord said: I was here but I would see and abide to see thy battle, and because thou hast manly fought and well maintained thy battle, I shall make thy name to be spread through all the world. S. Anthony was of so great fervour and burning love to God,

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that when Maximus, the emperor, slew and martyred christian men, he followed the martyrs that he might be a martyr with them and deserve it, and was sorry that martyrdom was not given to him.

After this, as S. Anthony went in desert he found a platter of silver in his way; then he thought whence this platter should come, seeing it was in no way for any man to pass, and also if it had fallen from any man he should have heard it sound in the falling. Then said he well that the devil had laid it there for to tempt him, and said: Ha! devil, thou weenest to tempt me and deceive me, but it shall not be in thy power. Then the platter vanished away as a little smoke. And in likewise it happed him of a mass of gold that he found in this way, which the devil had cast for to deceive him, which he took and cast it into the fire and anon it vanished away. After, it happed that S. Anthony on a time was in prayer, and saw in a vision all the world full of snares and gins. Then cried S. Anthony and said: O good Lord, who may escape from these snares? And a voice said to him: Very humility shall escape them without more.

When S. Anthony on a time was left in the air, the devils came against him and laid to him all the evils that he had done from his childhood, tofore the angels. Then said the angels: Thou oughtest not to tell the evils that have been defeated, but say if thou know any evil sith he was made a monk, then the devils contrived many evils, and when they might not prove them, the angels bare him higher than tofore, and after set him again in his place. S. Anthony recordeth of himself that he had seen a man so great and so high that he vaunted himself to be the virtue and

the providence of God, and said to me: Demand of me what thou wilt and I shall give it to thee. And I spit in the midst of his visage, and anon I armed me with the sign of the cross, and ran upon him, and anon he vanished away. And after this the devil appeared to him in so great a stature that he touched the heaven, and when S. Anthony had demanded him what he was, he answered: I am the devil and demand thee why these monks and these cursed christian men do me thus much shame? S. Anthony said: They do it by good right, for thou dost to them the worst thou canst, and the devil answered: I do to them none harm, but they trouble each other, I am destroyed and come to naught because that Jesu Christ reigneth over all. **The Life of S. Anthony**

A young man passed by S. Anthony and his bow in his hand, and beheld how S. Anthony played with his fellows, and was evil apaid. Then S. Anthony said to him that he should bend his bow, and so he did, and shot two or three shots tofore him, and anon he unbent his bow. Then demanded him S. Anthony why he held not his bow bent. And he answered that it should then be over weak and feeble; then said to him S. Anthony: In likewise play the monks, for to be after more strong to serve God.

A man demanded of S. Anthony what he might do to please God, and he answered: Over all where thou shalt be or shalt go, have God tofore thine eyes, and the holy scripture, and hold thee in one place all still, and walk not ne royle not about in the country, do these three things and thou shalt be safe.

An abbot came to S. Anthony for to be counselled of him what he might do for to be

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saved. S. Anthony answered to him: Have none affiance in the good that thou hast done, ne that thou hast kept thy belly and thy tongue well soberly, and repent thee not of penance that thou hast done I say, for like as fishes that have been long in the water when they come in to dry land they must die, in like wise the monks that go out of their cloister or cells, if they converse long with seculars they must needs lose their holiness and leave their good life. It behoveth the monks that they be solitary, and that they have three battles, that is of hearing, of speaking, and of seeing, and if they have but one of these battles, that is of the heart, yet they have overmuch.

Some hermits came to S. Anthony for to visit him, and their abbot was with them; then said S. Anthony to the hermits: Ye have a good wise man with you, and after he said to the abbot: Thou hast founden good brethren. Then answered the abbot: Truly I have good brethren, but there is no door on their house, each body may enter that will, and go into the stable and unbind the ass of within. And this said he because that the brethren had overmuch their mouths open to speak, for anon as they have thought on a thing is it come to the mouth. Then S. Anthony said: Ye ought to know that there be three bodily movings, that one is of nature, another of overmuch plenty of meats, and the third of the devil.

There was an hermit that had renounced the world, but not perfectly, for he had somewhat proper to himself, whom S. Anthony sent to the market to buy flesh, and as he was coming and brought the flesh, the dogs assailed him, and all to-tare him, and took the flesh from him; and when

he came to S. Anthony he told him what was happed to him; and then said S. Anthony to him: Thus as the hounds have done to thee, so do the devils to monks that keep money and have some proper to themselves.

On a time as S. Anthony was in the wilderness in his prayer and was weary, he said to our Lord, Lord, I have great desire to be saved, but my thoughts let me. Then appeared an angel to him and said: Do as I do, and thou shalt be safe, and he went out and saw him one while labour and another while pray, do thus and thou shalt be saved.

On a time when the brethren hermits were assembled tofore S. Anthony, they demanded of him of the state of souls when they be departed from the body, and the next night after a voice called S. Anthony and said: Arise, and go out and see up on high. When S. Anthony beheld upward on high he saw one long and terrible, whose head touched the clouds, which kept people having wings that would have fled to heaven, and this great man retained and caught some, and others he might not retain ne let for they flew forth up. Then he heard a noise full of joy, and another full of sorrow, and he understood that this was the devil that retained some souls that went not to heaven, and the other he might not hold ne retain, wherefore he made sorrow, and for the other he made joy, and so he heard the sorrow and the joy meddled together.

It happed on a time that S. Anthony laboured with his brethren the hermits, and he saw a vision much sorrowful, and therefore he kneeled down on his knees and prayed our Lord that he would empesh the great sorrow that was to come. Then the other hermits demanded what thing it was, and

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he said that it was a great sorrow, for I have seen great plenty of beasts which environed me, which feared all the country, and I wot well that this is to say that there shall come a great trouble of men like unto beasts, that shall defoul the sacraments of holy church. Then came a voice from heaven to S. Anthony that said that great abomination shall come to mine altar. And anon after, the heresy of Arius began, and much troubled holy church, and did many evils. They beat monks and other all naked tofore the people, and slew christian men like sheep upon the altars, and in especial one Balachyn did great persecution to whom S. Anthony wrote a letter which said: I see the ire and mal talent of our Lord coming upon thee if thou suffer not the christians to live in peace. Then I command thee that thou do to them no more villainy or thou shalt have a mischance hastily. The unhappy man received this letter and began to mock S. Anthony, and spit on it, and beat well him that brought the letter, and sent again to S. Anthony these words: If thou hast so great charge of thy monks come to me and I shall give to thee my discipline: but it happed that the fifteenth day after he mounted upon a horse over debonair, and nevertheless when the horse felt him upon him he bit him on the legs and thighs that he died on the third day.

It happed another time that the hermits were come to S. Anthony and demanded of him a collation. Then said S. Anthony: Do ye this that is written in the gospel, if one give to the other a stroke on that one cheek show him that other? And they made answer: We may not do so; then said he: Suffer ye it once debonairly; they answered: We may not. Then said S. Anthony

to his servant: Give them to drink good wine, for these monks be over delicious. Fair brethren, put yourselves to prayer, for ye have much great need. At the last S. Anthony assembled the hermits and gave to them the peace, and died and departed out of this world holily when he was of the age of an hundred and five years. Pray we to him that he pray for us. The Life of S. Fabian

Of S. Fabian, and the interpretation of his name first.

Fabian is as much to say as making sovereign beatitude or blessedness, that is to wit in getting in three manner wises or manners. First by right and reason of adoption of being in achate, and by victory.

Of S. Fabian the Martyr.

S. Fabian was a citizen and burgess of Rome, and it happed when the pope was dead that the people assembled for to choose another pope. And S. Fabian came to the election for to know who should be elect and chosen to that dignity. And anon a white dove descended from heaven and rested upon his head, and when the people saw that they marvelled much, and all they by common accord chose him for to be pope. This holy man Fabian, after when he was pope, he ordained throughout all the countries, seven deacons, and to them seven subdeacons, for to write the lives of martyrs.

There was an emperor in his time named Philip, which was much sinful, and came boldly in the vigil of Easter in to the church for to be houseled and communed, whom the pope drove

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away and denied to him the communion, until he had gone and shriven him of his sins, and let him stand among the seculars. This holy pope also ordained the chrism in the church. Then at the last when he had been pope thirteen years Decius the emperor commanded to smite off his head, and so he was crowned with the crown of martyrdom the year of our Lord two hundred and fifty-three.

Of S. Sebastian, and first the interpretation of his name.

Sebastian is said of sequens and beatitudo, and astim and ana, that is to say following the blessedness of the heavenly city, and this he gat five manner wises, after S. Austin, that is to say he gat by poverty the kingdom, with sorrow joy, with labour rest, with trouble glory, and with death life. Or Sebastianus is said of basto, for by the help of Christ he flourished in the church, and had a custom to comfort the martyrs in their torments.

Of S. Sebastian.

S. Sebastian was a man of great faith, a good christian man, and was born in Narbonne, and after taught and endoctrined in the city of Milan, and was so well beloved of Diocletian and Maximian, emperors of Rome, that they made him master and duke of their meiny and power, and always would have him in their presence. And he was always with them in habit of a knight, and was girded with a girdle of gold above like as was used. And all this did he not

for jollity, ne for cause that he dreaded death, or to die for the love of Jesu Christ, but he did it for to comfort the christian men in their belief when they were in distress for to reny the faith for dread of tormenting their body. The Life of S. Sebastian

It happed that two brethren german, very christian men and noble of lineage named Marcus and Marcellianus, were taken and constrained by the emperor for to worship and do sacrifice unto the idols, and there was given to them thirty days to be in prison without to receive death for their christian faith, within which time they might counsel and advise themselves whether they would do sacrifice to the idols or to leave, and their friends were suffered in this time of respite to come to them in prison, for to entreat and revoke them from their faith for to save their lives. Then came their parents and friends to them, and began to say: Whence cometh this hardness of heart that ye despise the old age of your father and mother which be now old? Ye get unto them new sorrows, the great pain that they had in your birth was not so great as the sorrow that they have now, and the sorrow that your mother suffereth is not to rehearse, wherefore right dear friends we pray you that ye will to these sorrows put some remedy, and depart you and leave the error of the christian men. And anon, after these words, their mother came, and entered in, in crying and tearing the hair of her head and in showing her paps, and said all weeping: Alas! I am mechant and unhappy that lose my two sons that I have given suck and nourished so sweetly; thou fair son, thou wert sweet and debonair to me. And to that other she said: Thou wert like and semblest well thy father. Alas! to what mischief

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and sorrow am I delivered for you my fair sons; I lose my sons which by their own will go for to die. My most dear children, have ye mercy on your sorrowful mother, that am in so great misease and in so great weepings for you; O poor caitiff that I am, what shall I do that lose my two sons? and to the death I see them go by their free will. Alas! this is a new manner of death, for to desire the death tofore it come. The mother had unnethe said her complaint but that their father was brought between two servants, which at the entry showed to his sons dust upon the poverty of his hoar head and cried: Alas I sorrowful caitiff come to the death of my two sons, which by their own agreement will die. O my over dearest sons that were the sustenance and staff of mine old age, sweetly nourished and taught and learned in science, what is this open foolishness and rage that is come on you and causeth you to love and desire so the death? There was never such a folly ne rage seen in the world. O ye my friends come forth and help me to beweep my children, ye that have hearts of pity, and ye old and young, weep ye, and I will weep so much that I see not the death of my sons. In the while that the father thus wept and said, came the two wives of these two sons, which bare in their arms their children, which weeping and crying said: Say ye now that be our dear husbands, in what ward leave ye us and your children! Alas, what shall become of us, our children, and our goods, that for your sake shall be lost? Alas caitiffs that we be, what thing is to us happened? how have ye hearts of iron? in what manner may ye so be hardened, so out of nature, and so cruel, that also despise your father and mother and refuse all your friends, chase away

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your wives, and reny and forsake your children, and with your will deliver yourselves for to die shamefully? Of these lamentable words tofore written, the two said sons Marcus and Marcellianus were so abashed and their hearts mollified, that almost they were returned from the christian faith, and would for the favour of their parents and friends have done sacrifice unto the idols. But at these words was S. Sebastian as a knight; when he saw them thus travailed, and so amollished anon came to them and said: O right noble knights of Jesu Christ, wise and hardy, which be come to the victory and now go aback, and for a few blandishing words vain and miserable, ye will lose the victory permanable, lose ye not the everlasting life for the blandishing words of women, be ye example to other christian men for to be strong in the faith, address ye your hearts above the world, and lose ye not your crown for the weepings of your wives and your children. They that now weep, certes should this day be glad and joyous if they knew that ye know. They ween that there be none other life but this which they see tofore their eyes, which after this shall come to nought: if they knew what is that other life without death and without heaviness, in which is joy permanable and everlasting, without doubt they would haste them for to go with you unto that life and should repute this life as vain. For it is full of misery and also false, and sith the beginning of the world hath deceived all his friends and conquered all them that have affiance in him, for she hath lied in her promise, yet doth she daily in this life more harm, for she maketh gluttons, and other she maketh lecherous, she maketh thieves for to slay, and the angry cruel, and the liars false and deceivable; she putteth

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discord among wedded and married people, and debate among the peaceable, by the world cometh all malice and also felony. This evil do they that in this life put their desires and ween long to live therein, and when they that thus serve the world have used their life in doing this evil aforesaid, then giveth she to them her daughter, that is the death perpetual; that is the reward that the life of this world giveth to her servants that depart from this world dispurveyed, and bear nothing with them but their sins. After this S. Sebastian turned him to their parents and friends and said to them in this manner: O ye my friends, lo, here the life of this world which deceiveth you in such wise that ye discounsel your friends from the everlasting life, ye distrouble your children that they should not come to the company of heaven, and to the honour permanable and to the amity of the emperor celestial, by your foolish words and your false weepings; if they should assent to your repeal, they should but a while dwell with you and after should depart from your company where ye should see them in torments that should never end, whereas cruel flame devoureth the souls of miscreants and worshippers of idols, and the dragons eat the lips of cursed men, and the serpents destroy them that be evil; there where is heard nothing but wailings, weepings, and horrible cries of souls which burn continually in the fire of hell, and ever shall burn without dying. Suffer ye that your sons escape these torments, and think how ye may escape and let them suffer death for the love of Jesu Christ. Think not but they, when they shall be thus departed from you, go for to make ready your place and your mansion in heaven, where ye and you

children may be in joy perpetual. In this hour and time that S. Sebastian, that was in habit of a knight clad with a mantle and girt with a girdle of gold, and had said these words, anon came a great light, in the which appeared a youngling clad with a white mantle among seven angels, and gave to S. Sebastian the peace saying: Thou shalt be alway with me. This saw the wife of Nicostratus named Zoe in whose house Marcus and Marcellianus were in prison, which had been mute and dumb six years by a sickness that she had; but she had understood that which S. Sebastian had said and had seen the light about him, and she fell down to his feet, and by signs of her hands made prayers to him. And after when S. Sebastian knew that she had lost her speech, anon he said to her: If I be the servant of Jesu Christ and if all that I have said be true, then I pray him that he will render to thee thy speech again that opened the mouth of Zacharias the prophet. And anon escried this woman much high, and said: The word that thou hast said is very true, and blessed be thou and the word of thy mouth, and blessed be all they that by thee believe in Jesu Christ the son of God, for I have seen certainly seven angels tofore thee holding a book, in which was written all that which thou hast said, and cursed be they that believe thee not. And Nicostratus husband of this woman, and the father and mother, and all the friends of Marcellianus and Marcus received the christian faith and were all baptized by Polycarpus the priest unto the number of seventy-eight persons, men, women, and children. And ten days during they abode together in orisons and prayers, and thanked God of his benefits. Among them was

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Tranquillinus, father unto the holy martyrs afore said, which had, eleven years during, the gout in his feet and hands, and as soon as Polycarp had baptized him he became as whole and sound in his feet and hands as a child. After the ten days Agrestin and Chromatius, provosts of Rome, made Tranquillinus their father to come tofore them, and demanded of him how his sons were advised and counselled, and he answered: Much well did ye when ye gave to them respite, for in the meantime they that should have died have found life and joy And the provost supposed that his sons had been turned, and said: To-morn I shall see how thy sons shall make sacrifice to the idols, by whom thou and they may dwell in peace. And Tranquillinus said: Gentle man, if thou will justly adore and work about me and my sons thou shalt find that the name of christian men is of great virtue. And the provost said: Tranquillinus, art thou wood? And he answered: I have been out of my wit, but as soon as I believed in Jesu Christ I received health of body and of soul The provost said: I see well that the respite of thy sons hath brought thee in error. Tranquillinus said: Know you of what works come error The provost bade him say, and he said: The first error is to leave the way of life and go by the way of death for to dispute that men which be dead for to be gods, and to adore their images, made of wood or of stone. The provost said: Then they be no gods that we adore? Tranquillinus said: It is read in our books what men they were that ye adore for gods, how evil they lived, and how mechantly they died. Saturnus whom ye worship for god was lord of Crete, and ate the flesh of his children, how? is not he one of your gods? And

Jupiter his son, whom ye adore, which slew his father, and took his sister to his wife, what evil was this? how art thou in great error that adorest this cursed man, and sayest to the image of stone: Thou art my god, and to the stock of tree: Help me. The provost said: If there be none but one God invisible that ye adore, wherefore then adore ye Jesu Christ whom the Jews crucified? Tranquillinus answered: If thou knewest of a ring of gold in which were a precious stone, lying in the mire of a valley, thou wouldst send thy servants for to take up this ring and if they might not lift it up, thou wouldst unclothe thyself of thy clothes of silk and do on a coarse coat and wouldst help to take up this ring and make a great feast. The provost said: Wherefore hast thou put forth this proposition now? Tranquillinus answered: For to show to thee that we adore one only God. The provost said: What understandest thou by this ring? Tranquillinus said. the gold of the ring is the body human, and the precious stone signifieth the soul which is enclosed in the body, the body and the soul make a man, like as the gold and the precious stone make a ring, and much more precious is the man to Jesu Christ than the ring is to thee. Thou sendest thy servants for to take up this ring out of the dirt or mire, and they may not. Thus sent God into this world the prophets for to draw the human lineage out of the ordure of sins, and they might not do it. And like as thou shouldst leave thy rich clothes and clothe thee with a coarse coat, and wouldst descend into the privy, and put thy hands into foul ordure to take up the ring, right so the majesty of God hid the light of his divinity by a carnal vestment, which he took of our nature human, and

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clad him therewith and descended from heaven, and came here beneath into the privy of this world, and put his hands in the ordure of our miseries in suffering hunger and thirst, and took us up out of the filth and washed us from our sins by the water of baptism. And thus he which despiseth thee because thou shouldst descend in a foul habit to take up the ring, thou mightest well put him to death. Thus all they that reny or despise Jesu Christ because he humbled himself for to save man, may in no wise escape from the death of hell. The provost said: I see well that these be but fables; thou hast taken respite for thy sons, knowest thou not well that the emperor our lord is cruel against christian men? Tranquillinus said: It is folly to doubt more human puissance than the puissance divine, they that be cruel against us may well torment our bodies but they may not take from our heart Jesu Christ. Then the provost put Tranquillinus in the hands of the sergeants saying: Show to me the medicine by which thou art healed of thy gout, and I shall give to thee gold without number. Tranquillinus said: Know thou that much evil shall come to them that sell and buy the grace of God, but if thou wilt be whole of the malady of the gout, believe in Jesu Christ and thou shalt be whole as I am. The provost said: Bring him to me that hath healed thee. Tranquillinus went to Polycarp and said to him all this, and brought him with S. Sebastian unto the provost and informed him in the faith, and he prayed them that he might have his health, and S. Sebastian said that he should first reny his idols and give him licence to break them, and then he should have his health. Then Chromatius the provost said that his servants should break them. S. Sebastian said:

They be afeared and dare not break them, and if the fiends hurt any of them by any occasion, the misbelievers would say that they were hurt because they brake their gods. And then Polycarp and S. Sebastian destroyed more than two hundred idols. Then said they to the provost: Why hast thou not received the health whilst we brake the idols? Thou keepest yet thy misbelief or else keepest yet some idols. Then he showed them a chamber which was light as had been of stars, whereupon his father had dispended two hundred pois of gold, by which he knew things for to come. Then said S. Sebastian: As long as thou keepest this whole thou mayst never have health, and then he agreed it should be broken. Tiburtius, his son, which was a noble young man, said plainly that so noble a work should not be destroyed: How well I will not be against my father's health, this will I well, that there be ordained two furnaces of fire burning, and then I will that ye destroy this work, and if my father have his health I shall be content, and if he receive not his health, then I will that ye two shall be burnt in these two furnaces of fire all quick. And S. Sebastian said: Be it as thou hast said: And forthwith they went and brake the chamber. And in the meanwhile the angel of our Lord appeared to the provost and said his health was given to him, and anon he was all whole, and ran after him for to have kissed his feet, but he denied him for he had not received baptism. And then he and Tiburtius his son with one thousand four hundred of their family were baptized. Then Zoe was taken of the miscreants and tormented so long that she gave up the spirit. And when Tranquillinus heard that, he came forth and said: Alas! why live we so long? Women go tofore

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us to the crown of martyrdom; and within a few days after he was stoned to death. And Tiburtius was commanded that he should go barefoot upon burning coals or else do sacrifice to the idols, and then he made the sign of the cross upon the coals and went on them barefoot, and he said: Methinketh I go upon rose flowers in the name of our Lord Jesu Christ. To whom Fabian the provost said: It is not unknown to us that your Jesu Christ is a teacher of sorcery. To whom Tiburtius said: Hold thy peace thou cursed wretch, for thou art not worthy to name so worthy, so holy ne so sweet a name. Then the provost was wroth and commanded to smite off his head, and so he was martyred. And then Marcellianus and Marcus were sore tormented and bound to a pillar, and as they were so bound they said: Lo! how good and joyful it is brethren to dwell together. To whom the provost said: Ye wretches, do away your madness and deliver yourselves, and they said: We were never so well fed, we would that thou wouldest let us stand here till that the spirits should depart out of our bodies. And then the provost commanded that they should be pierced through the body with spears, and so they fulfilled their martyrdom. After this S. Sebastian was acccused to the emperor that he was christian, wherefore Diocletian, the emperor of Rome, made him come tofore him, and said to him: I have always loved thee well, and have made thee master of my palace; how then hast thou been christian privily against my health, and in despite of our gods? S. Sebastian said: Always I have worshipped Jesu Christ for thy health and for the state of Rome, and I think for to pray and demand help of the idols of stone is a great folly. With these words

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Diocletian was much angry and wroth, and commanded him to be led to the field and there to be bounden to a stake for to be shot at. And the archers shot at him till he was as full of arrows as an urchin is full of pricks, and thus left him there for dead. The night after came a christian woman for to take his body and to bury it, but she found him alive and brought him to her house, and took charge of him till he was all whole. Many christian men came to him which counselled him to void the place, but he was comforted and stood upon a step where the emperor should pass by, and said to him: The bishops of the idols deceive you evilly which accuse the christian men to be contrary to the common profit of the city, that pray for your estate and for the health of Rome Diocletian said: Art thou not Sebastian whom we commanded to be shot to death. And S. Sebastian said: Therefore our Lord hath rendered to me life to the end that I should tell you that evilly and cruelly ye do persecutions unto christian men. Then Diocletian made him to be brought into prison into his palace, and to beat him so sore with stones till he died. And the tyrants threw his body into a great privy, because the christian men should make no feast to bury his body, ne of his martyrdom. But S. Sebastian appeared after to S. Lucy, a glorious widow, and said to her: In such a privy shalt thou find my body hanging at an hook, which is not defouled with none ordure, when thou hast washed it thou shalt bury it at the catacombs by the apostles. And the same night she and her servants accomplished all that Sebastian had commanded her. He was martyred the year of our Lord two hundred and eighty seven.

And S. Gregory telleth in the first book of his

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Dialogues that a woman of Tuscany which was new wedded was prayed for to go with other women to the dedication of the church of Sebastian, and the night tofore she was so moved in her flesh that she might not abstain from her husband, and on the morn, she having greater shame of men than of God, went thither, and anon as she was entered into the oratory where the relics of S. Sebastian were, the fiend took her and tormented her before all the people. And then the priest took the coverture of the altar and covered her, and then the devil assailed the priest. Her friends led her to the enchanters that they should enchant the fiend, but as soon as they began the enchantment, by the judgment of God a legion of devils entered into her, that is six thousand six hundred and sixty-six, and vexed her more sharply than tofore, and an holy man named Fortunatus by his prayers healed her. It is read in the gestes of the Lombards that, in the time of King Gumbert all Italy was smitten with so great a pestilence that unnethe they that were alive might bury the dead, and this pestilence was most at Rome and Pavia. Then the good angel was seen visibly of many, and an evil angel following bearing a staff whom he bade smite and slay, and as many strokes as he smote an house, so many dead persons were borne out of it. Then at last it was shewed to one by God's grace that this pestilence should not cease till that they had made an altar to S. Sebastian at Pavia, which then was made in the church of S. Peter, and anon the pestilence ceased, and thither from Rome relics of S. Sebastian were brought. And S. Ambrose in his preface saith thus: O Lord, the blood of thy blessed martyr S. Sebastian was shed for the confession of thy name.

he hath showed thy marvels that they profit in infirmity virtue, and giveth to our studies profit, and to them not steadfast to thee it giveth aid and help. Then let us pray to this holy martyr S. Sebastian that he pray unto our Lord that we may be delivered from all pestilence and from sudden death, and so depart advisedly hence, that we may come to everlasting joy and glory in heaven.

The Life of S. Agnes

And next followeth of S. Agnes, and first the interpretation of her name.

Agnes is said of agna a lamb, for she was humble and debonair as a lamb, or of agnos in Greek, which is to say debonair and piteous, for she was debonair and merciful. Or Agnes of agnoscendo, for she knew the way of truth, and after this S. Austin saith, truth is opposed against vanity, falseness, and doubleness, for these three things were taken from her for the truth that she had.

Of S. Agnes.

The blessed virgin S. Agnes was much wise, and well taught, as S. Ambrose witnesseth, and wrote her passion. She was fair of visage, but much fairer in the christian faith, she was young of age, and aged in wit, for in the thirteenth year of her age she lost the death that the world giveth, and found life in Jesu Christ, which when she came from school the son of the prefect of Rome, for the emperor, loved her, and when his father and mother knew it, they offered to give much riches with him if he might have her in marriage, and offered

The Life of S. Agnes

to S. Agnes precious gems and jewels, which she refused to take, whereof it happed that the young man was ardently esprised in the love of S. Agnes, and came again and took with him more precious and richer adornments, made with all manner of precious stones, and as well by his parents as by himself offered to S. Agnes rich gifts and possessions, and all the delights and deduits of the world, and all to the end to have her in marriage. But S. Agnes answered to him in this matter: Go from me thou fardel of sin, nourishing of evils and morsel of death, and depart, and know thou that I am prevented and am loved of another lover, which hath given to me many better jewels, which hath fianced me by his faith, and is much more noble of lineage than thou art, and of estate. He hath clad me with precious stones and with jewels of gold, he hath set in my visage a sign that I receive none other espouse but him, and hath showed me over-great treasures which he must give me if I abide with him. I will have none other spouse but him, I will seek none other, in no manner may I leave him, with him am I firm and fastened in love, which is more noble, more puissant and fairer than any other, whose love is much sweet and gracious, of whom the chamber is now for to receive me where the virgins sing merrily. I am now embraced of him of whom the mother is a virgin, and his father knew never woman, to whom the angels serve. The sun and the moon marvel them of his beauty, whose works never fail, whose riches never minish, by whose odour dead men rise again to life, by whose touching the sick men be comforted, whose love is chastity. To him I have given my faith, to him I have commanded my heart; when I love him

The Life of S. Agnes

then am I chaste, and when I touch him then am I pure and clean, and when I take him then am I a virgin, this is the love of my God. When the young man had heard all this he was despaired, as he that was taken in blind love, and was over sore tormented, in so much that he lay down sick in his bed for the great sorrow that he had. Then came the physicians and anon knew his malady, and said to his father that he languished of carnal love that he had to some woman. Then the father enquired and knew that it was this woman, and did do speak to S. Agnes for his son, and said to her how his son languished for her love. S. Agnes answered that in no wise she would break the faith of her first husband. Upon that the provost demanded who was her first husband, of whom she so much avaunted, and in his power so much trusted. Then one of her servants said she was christian, and that she was so enchanted that she said Jesu Christ was her espouse. And when the provost heard that she was christian the provost was much glad because to have power on her, for then the christian people were in the will of the lord, and if they would not reny their God and their belief all their goods should be forfeited. Wherefore then the provost made S. Agnes to come in justice and he examined her sweetly, and after cruelly by menaces. S. Agnes, well comforted, said to him: Do what thou wilt, for my purpose shalt thou never change. And when she saw him now flattering and now terribly angry she scorned him. And the provost said to her, being all angry: One of two things thou shalt choose, either do sacrifice to our gods with the virgins of the goddess Vesta, or go to the bordel to be abandoned to all that thither come, to the great shame and blame of all thy lineage. S.

The Life of S. Agnes

Agnes answered: If thou knewest who is my God thou wouldst not say to me such words, but for as much as I know the virtue of my God, I set nothing by thy menaces, for I have his angel which is keeper of my body. Then the judge all araged made to take off her clothes, and all naked to be led to the bordel. And thus S. Agnes that refused to do sacrifice to the idols, was delivered naked to go to the bordel, but anon as she was unclothed God gave to her such grace that the hairs of her head became so long that they covered all her body to her feet, so that her body was not seen. And when S. Agnes entered into the bordel anon she found the angel of God ready for to defend her, and environed S. Agnes with a bright clearness in such wise that no man might see her ne come to her. Then made she of the bordel her oratory, and in making her prayers to God she saw tofore her a white vesture, and anon therewith she clad her and said: I thank thee Jesu Christ which accountest me with thy virgins and hast sent me this vesture. All they that entered made honour and reverence to the great clearness that they saw about S. Agnes, and came out more devout and more clean than they entered. At last came the son of the provost with a great company for to accomplish his foul desires and lusts. And when he saw his fellows come out and issue all abashed, he mocked them and called them cowards. And then he, all araged, entered for to accomplish his evil will. And when he came to the clearness, he advanced him for to take the virgin, and anon the devil took him by the throat and strangled him that he fell down dead.

And when the provost heard these tidings of his son he ran weeping to the bordel, and began

crying, to say to S. Agnes: O thou cruel woman, why hast thou showed thy enchantment on my son? and demanded of her how his son was dead, and by what cause. To whom S. Agnes answered: He took him into his power to whom he had abandoned his will. Why be not all they dead, said he, that entered here tofore him? For his fellows saw the miracle of the great clearness and were afeard and went their way unhurt, for they did honour to my God which hath clad me with this vestment and hath kept my body, but your villainous son, as soon as he entered into this house began to bray and cry, and when he would have laid hand upon me, anon the devil slew him as thou seest. If thou mayst raise him, said he, it may well appear that thou hast not put him to death. And S. Agnes answered: How well that thy creance is not worthy to impetre ne get that of our Lord, nevertheless because it is time that the virtue of God be showed, go ye all out that I may make my prayer to God. And when she was in her prayers the angel came and raised him to life, and anon he went out and began to cry, with a loud voice, that the God of christian men was very God in heaven, and in earth, and in the sea, and that the idols were vain that they worshipped, which might not help them ne none other. **The Life of S. Agnes**

Then the bishops of the idols made a great discord among the people, so that all they cried: Take away this sorceress and witch that turned men's minds and alieneth their wits. When the provost saw these marvels he would gladly have delivered S. Agnes because she had raised his son, but he doubted to be banished, and set in his place a lieutenant named Aspasius for to satisfy the people, and because he could not deliver her he

The Life of S. Agnes

departed sorrowfully. This Aspasius did do make a great fire among all the people and did do cast S. Agnes therein. Anon as this was done the flame departed in two parts, and burnt them that made the discords, and she abode all whole without feeling the fire. The people weened that she had done all by enchantment. Then made S. Agnes her orison to God thanking him that she was escaped from the peril to lose her virginity, and also from the burning of the flame. And when she had made her orison the fire lost all his heat, and quenched it. Aspasius, for the doubtance of the people, commanded to put a sword in her body, and so she was martyred. Anon came the christian men and the parents of S. Agnes and buried the body, but the heathen defended it, and cast so stones at them, that unnethe they escaped. She suffered martyrdom in the time of Constantine the great, which began to reign the year of our Lord three hundred and nine.

Among them that buried her body was one Emerentiana which had been fellow to S. Agnes, how be it she was not yet christened, but an holy virgin, she came also to the sepulchre of S. Agnes, which constantly reproved the gentiles, and of them she was stoned to death and slain. Anon there came an earthquaver, lightning and thunder, that many of the paynims perished, so that forthon the christian people might surely come to the sepulchre unhurt, and the body of Emerentiana was buried by the body of S. Agnes. It happed that when the friends of S. Agnes watched at her sepulchre on a night, they saw a great multitude of virgins clad in vestments of gold and silver, and a great light shone tofore them, and on the right side was a lamb more white than snow, and saw also S.

Agnes among the virgins which said to her parents: Take heed and see that ye bewail me no more as dead, but be ye joyful with me, for with all these virgins Jesu Christ hath given me most brightest habitation and dwelling, and am with him joined in heaven whom in earth I loved with my thought. And this was the eighth day after her passion. And because of this vision holy church maketh memory of her the eight days of the feast after, which is called Agnetis secundo. **The Life of S. Agnes**

Of her we read an example that in the church of S. Agnes was a priest which was named Paulus and always served in that church, and had right great temptation of his flesh, but because he doubted to anger our Lord he kept him from sin, and prayed to the pope that he would give him leave for to marry. The pope considered his simpleness, and for his bounty he gave him a ring in which was an emerald, and commanded that he should go to the image of S. Agnes which was in his church, and pray her that she would be his wife. This simple man did so, and the image put forth her finger and he set the ring thereon, and then she drew her finger again and kept the ring fast. And then anon all his temptation carnal was quenched and taken away from him, and yet as it is said the ring is on the finger of the image.

Constance the daughter of Constantine was smitten with a sore and foul leprosy. When she had heard of the vision of S. Agnes, at her tomb showed to her friends, she came to the sepulchre of S. Agnes, and when she was in her prayers she fell asleep, and she saw in her sleep, S. Agnes saying to her: Constance, work constantly, and if thou wilt believe in Christ, thou shalt anon be delivered of thy sickness, wherewith she awoke

The Life of S. Vincent

and found herself perfectly whole, and anon she received baptism, and founded a church upon the body of the virgin and there abode in her virginity, and assembled there many virgins, because of her good example. In another place it is read that when the church of S. Agnes was void, the pope said to a priest that he would give to him a wife for to nourish and keep, and he meant to commit the church of S. Agnes to his cure. And he delivered to him a ring and bade him to wed the image, and the image put forth her finger and he set on it a ring and anon she closed the finger to her hand and kept the ring, and so he espoused her. Of this virgin saith S. Ambrose in the book of virgins: This virgin, young men, old men and children praise, there is none more to be praised than that may be praised of all. S. Ambrose saith in his preface that this blessed S. Agnes despised the delights of noblesse, and deserved heavenly dignity, she left the desires of man's fellowship, and she found the fellowship of the everlasting King. And she, receiving a precious death for the confession of Jesu Christ, is made conformable to him everlastingly, to reign in joy in heaven, to the which he bring us for whose glorious name and faith this glorious virgin S. Agnes suffered martyrdom of death.

Here beginneth the life of S. Vincent. And first of the interpretation of his name.

Vincent is as much to say as burning vices, or overcoming burnings and keeping victory, for he burnt and destroyed vices by mortification of his flesh, he vanquished the burnings of torments by

stedfast sufferance, he held the victory of the world by despising of the same. He vanquished three things in the world, that is to wit, false errors, foul loves, and worldly dreads, which things he overcame by wisdom, by cleanness, and by constancy. Of whom S. Austin saith that the martyrdoms of saints have enseigned that the world is overcome with all errors, loves and dreads. And some affirm that S. Austin wrote and compiled his passion, which Prudentius set right clearly in verses.

The Life of S. Vincent

Vincent was noble of lineage, but he was more noble by faith and religion, and was deacon to S. Valerian bishop. He was in his childhood set to study, where by divine providence he flowered in double science most profoundly, that is to say in divinity and humanity; to whom S. Valerian, because he was empeshed in his tongue, committed to him the faits and works of charge, and himself entended to prayer and contemplation. And by the commandment of Dacian the provost, Vincent and Valerian were drawn to Valence and there cast in prison. And when the provost had supposed they had been almost perished for hunger and pain, he commanded them to come tofore him. And when he saw them whole and joyful he, being wroth, began to cry much strongly and said: What sayest thou Valerian which under the name of thy religion dost against the decrees of princes? And as the blessed Valerian answered lightly, S. Vincent said to him: Worshipful father answer him not so with a timorous heart, but put out thy voice and escry him freely, and father, if thou wilt command me, I shall go answer to the judge. To whom Valerian said: Right dear son, it is long since I have committed

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to thee the charge of speaking, and now it behoveth thee to answer for the faith for which we be here. Then S. Vincent turned to the judge, and said to Dacian: Thou hast holden unto now words to reny our faith, but know thou that it is great felony to the wisdom of christian men to blame and reny our christian faith. Then Dacian, being wroth, commanded that the bishop should be put in exile, and Vincent as a man presumptuous and despitous should be put to be tormented in the place named eculeus. And it was made like a cross thwart of which the two ends were fixed in the earth, and that his members should thereon be broken, for to fear the other. And when he was all thus tobroken, Dacian said to him: Say Vincent now seest thou thy body unhappy? And Vincent smiling said to him: This is all that I have desired. Then the provost being wroth began to say and menace with many torments, and Vincent said to him: O unhappy man, how weenest thou to anger me? the more grievously that thou tormentest me, so much more pity shall God have on me. Arise up thou unhappy man and cursed, and by thy wicked spirit thou shalt be vanquished, for thou shalt find me more stronger by the virtue of God to suffer thy torments, than thou hast power to torment me. Then the provost was angry and began to cry, and the butchers took scourges and rods, and began to smite and beat him with rods of iron. And S Vincent said: What sayest thou, Dacian? thou thyself avengest me of my torments. Then the provost was wood, and said to the butchers: Ye wretches what do ye, why fail and wax fain your hands? Ye have overcome murderers and adulterers, so that they could hide nothing among

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your torments, and this Vincent only shall more surmount your torments. Then the butchers took combs of iron, and began to comb him on the sides within the flesh, that the blood ran down over all his body and that the entrails and guts appeared by the jointures of his sides. And Dacian said to him: Vincent have pity on thyself in such wise that thou mayst recover thy fair youth, and win to spare the torments that be yet to come. And Vincent said to him: O venomous tongue of the devil, I doubt nothing of thy torments, but I fear sore that thou wilt fain to have mercy on me, for so much more as I see thee angry, so much more am I rejoiced, I will that thou in no wise minish ne lessen thy torments, so that thou know that thou be vanquished in all things. Then was he taken out of the torment, and was brought into a torment of fire, and he blamed and reproved the butchers of their long tarrying. Then with his goodwill he mounted upon the gridiron and there was roasted, broiled and burnt in all his members, and was sticked with small nails of iron, and pricked with burning pointels of iron. And when the blood ran into the fire and made wounds upon wounds, then they cast salt into the fire, that it should sparkle and spring in the wounds of his body, on all parts of the wounds that it should more cruelly burn, and do him more pain on his body by the flames, in such wise that the pricks of iron might not hold on his members, but on his entrails which hung out of his body, so that he might not move him. And for all this he was unmovable, but he prayed our Lord Jesu Christ with joined hands up to heaven. And when the ministers had said this to Dacian, he said: Alas! we be all vanquished; and he liveth

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yet, and because he may yet live longer, shut ye him in a much dark prison, and gather together all the sharp shells and prick them in his feet, and let him be stretched on them without any human comfort, and when he shall be dead come and tell me. And these right cruel ministers obeyed him as to their lord right cruel, but the king for whom he suffered the pain so inhuman, changed to him all this into joy, for the darknesses were all chased away out of the prison by great light, and the sharpness of the shells were turned into softness and sweetness of all manner of flowers, his feet were unbound, and he used the comfort of the honour of angels, and like as he had gone on the flowers singing with angels, the sweet sound of the song, and the sweetness and odour of the flowers, which was marvellous, was smelled out of the prison. And when the keepers had seen through the crevices of the prison this that they saw within, they were converted and turned to the faith. And when Dacian heard this he was wood, and said: What shall we do to him more? we be overcome. Now then let him be borne into a right soft bed, with soft clothes, so that he be not made more glorious, and to the end that he die not yet, but that he be made strong again, and be kempt again in new torments. And when he was brought in a soft bed, and had therein rested a while he rendered and gave up his spirit unto God in the year of our Lord two hundred and eighty eight under Diocletian and Maximian Emperors. And when Dacian heard say that he was dead, he was much sorrowful, and said that in that wise he was also vanquished: But sith I might not overcome him living I shall punish him dead, and if I may not have victory I shall be fulfilled of the pain.

The Life of S. Vincent

Then the body of S. Vincent was cast in a field for to be devoured of the beasts and fowls, by the commandment of Dacian, but it was kept by angels from touching of any beasts, and after came a raven which drove away all other birds and fowls, greater than he was, and chased away also a wolf with his bill and beak, and then turned his head towards the body as he that marvelled of the keeping of the angels. And when Dacian heard this thing: I trow, said he, that I may not surmount him when he is dead. Then commanded he that he should be cast into the sea with a mill stone bound to his neck, to the end that he that might not be destroyed upon the earth of beasts, should be devoured in the sea of belues and great fishes. Then the mariners that led the body in to the sea, cast it therein, but the body was sooner arrived aland than the mariners were, and was found of a lady and of some others by the revelation of Jesu Christ, and was honourably buried of them. And S. Austin saith of this holy blessed martyr, S. Vincent, that he vanquished so in words, he vanquished in pains, he vanquished in confession, he vanquished in tribulation, he overcame the fire, he overcame the water, he vanquished death and vanquished life. This Vincent was tormented for to dwell with God, he was scourged for to be introduced, he was beaten for to be enstrengthened, he burnt to be purged, he was gladder of the dread of God than of the world, and had liefer die to the world than to God. Also S. Austin saith in another place that a marvellous thing is set tofore our eyes, that is: a wicked judge, a cruel tormentor, and a martyr not overcome. And Prudentius wrote of cruelty and pity, saying that Vincent

The Life of S. Basil

said to Dacian: The torments of the prison, the nails, the ongles, the straining combs of iron, with the flames of fire, and death which is last end of the pains, all these be plays and japes to christian men. Then Dacian said as overcome: Bind him and draw his arms out of their joints, and break ye all the bones in such wise that all the members be departed, to the end that the breath of him spring out by the holes of his members so torn. And the knight of God laughed at these things, and blamed the bloody hands because they put not the hooks and nails deeper in his members. And when he was in the prison the angel of God said to him: Arise up noble martyr, surely arise up, for thou shalt be our fellow, and be accompanied with saints. O knight invincible, strongest of all strong, now these aspre torments and cruel, doubt thee now a vanquisher. And Prudentius saith: Thou art only noble of the world, thou bearest only the victory of double battle, thou hast deserved two crowns together. Pray we then to him that he impetre grace of our Lord Jesu Christ that we may deserve to come unto his bliss and joy in heaven where he reigneth. Amen.

Here followeth the Life of S. Basil, bishop. And first of the interpretation of his name.

Basil is said of basis in Greek, which is as much to say as a foundement, and leos, that is people, for he was foundement of them that would go to their maker. Or else it is said of basilico a serpent, for he overcame the serpent, enemy of mankind.

The Life of S. Basil

S. Basil was a venerable bishop and a solemn doctor, of whom Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium wrote the life. And it was showed in a vision to an hermit, named Effrem how much holy he was. On a time as the said Effrem was in a trance he saw a pillar of fire, whose head reached heaven and a voice thereupon saying: Such is Basil, like unto this pillar that thou seest. And after this the hermit came to the city for to see at the day of Epiphany so noble a man, and when he saw him, he was clad with a white vesture going honourably with the clergy, then the hermit said to himself, I see well that I have laboured in vain, and for nought, he that is set in such honour may not be such as I have seen, we that have borne the burden and labour of the heat of the day in great pain, we had never such thing, and he here which is set in such honour, and also thus accompanied, is a column of fire, now I have great marvel what this may be. And S. Basil that saw this in spirit, made him to be brought to him, and when he was come he saw a tongue of fire speaking in his mouth. Then said Effrem: Truly Basil is great, truly Basil is the pillar of fire, and verily the Holy Ghost speaketh in his mouth. And Effrem said to S. Basil: Sire, I pray thee that thou impetre of God that I may speak Greek, to whom S. Basil said: Thou hast demanded a hard thing, nevertheless he prayed for him, and he spake Greek. Another hermit saw S. Basil, how he went in the habit of a bishop and deemed evilly in his thought, how he delighted in this estate in vain glory, and anon there came a voice that said to him: Thou delightest thee more in playing with and handling thy cat, than Basil doth in all his array and adornments.

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Valens the emperor which sustained the Arian heretics, took away a church from the christian men, and gave it to the Arians, to whom S. Basil said: O thou emperor, it is written: Honor regis judicium diligit. The honour of the king requireth true judgment, and the doom of a king is justice, and wherefore then hast thou commanded that the catholic christian men be put out of holy church? And the emperor said to him: Yet returnest thou to say villainy to me? it appertaineth not to thee. To whom S. Basil said: It appertaineth well to me, and also to die for justice. Then Demosthenes, provost of the meats of the emperor, upholder of the Arians, spake for them, and made an answer corrupted in language for to make satisfaction. And S. Basil said to him: It appertaineth to thee to ordain for the meats of the emperor and not to enquire of the teachings divine; the which, as confused, held him still, and said not. And the emperor said to S. Basil: Now go thou forth and judge thou between them, and not for favour ne over great love that thou hast to that one party, ne for hate that thou hast to that other.

Then S. Basil went to them and said tofore the Arians and to the Catholics that the doors of the church should be shut fast, and sealed with the seals of either party, and that every one should pray to God for his right, and that the church should be delivered to them at whose prayer it should open. And thus they accorded. The Arians put them to prayer three days and three nights, and when they came to the doors they opened not. Then S. Basil ordained a procession, and came to the church, and knocked a stroke with his crook, saying: Attollite portas principes vestras, etc., and anon as he had said the verse the doors opened,

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and they entered in and gave laud and praisings to God, and so was their church rendered to them again. And after, the emperor did promise to S. Basil much good and honour if he would consent to him. And S. Basil said that was a demand to make to children, for they that be fulfilled with divine words will not suffer that one only syllable of the divine science be corrupted. Then the emperor had great indignation of him, and took a pen for to write the sentence on him that he should be exiled, and the first pen brake, and the second, and also the third, and his hand began to tremble for fear; then in great indignation he all to-rent the schedule.

There was an honest worshipful man named Heradius which had but one daughter, whom he disposed to consecrate to God, but the fiend, enemy to mankind, inflamed and made one of the servants of the same to burn in the love of this maid. And when he remembered that he was but a servant, him thought it not possible, that ever he should attain to come to his desire of so noble a virgin. He went to an enchanter to whom he promised great quantity of money if he would help him, to whom the enchanter answered that he could not do it; But I shall send thee to the devil which is my master and lord, and if thou do that he shall say to thee, thou shalt have thy desire; and the young man said he would so do. And this enchanter sent a letter by him to the devil, this containing:

My lord and master, because that I must hastily and busily draw all them that I may from the religion of christendom, and bring them to thy will, to the end that thy party alway grow and multiply, I send to thee this young man, esprised

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in the love of the maid, and demandeth that his desires may be acomplished, that herein I have glory and honour, and that from now forthon I may gather to thee and draw more. Then he gave him his letter, and bad him go, and at midnight stand upon the tomb of a paynim, and call the devil, and hold up this letter in the air, and anon he shall come to thee. And he anon went forth and did as he was bidden, and held the letter in the air, and forthwith came the prince of darkness fellowshipped with a great multitude of fiends, and when he had read the schedule he said to the young man: Wilt thou believe in me if I accomplish thy desire? And he answered that he would so do. Then the devil said to him: Reny then Jesu Christ, which said: I reny him. And the devil said to him: Ye christian men, ye be all false and untrue, for when ye have to do ye come to me, and when ye have that ye demand, anon after ye reny me, and return to your Jesu Christ, and he receiveth you because he is right debonair; but if thou wilt that I do thy will, make a bond of thine own handwriting and deliver it to me, and let it contain that thou hast forsaken Jesu Christ, thy baptism, and the profession of christian religion, and that thou be my servant and with me at the judgment to be damned; and anon all this he wrote and took it to the devil, and put him in his servitude; and anon the devil took with him fiends that served for fornication, and commanded them that they should go and inflame the heart of that maid in the love of that young man. The which came to her and so inflamed her in the love of that young man that she fell down to the ground tofore her father crying piteously and saying: Father have pity on me, for cruelly I am tormented for

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the love of your servant; have mercy on me, and show to me your fatherly love that ye owe to me, that ye give to me in marriage the young man that I desire, and if ye do not, ye shall see anon that I shall die, and thereof shall ye answer at the day of doom. And the father weeping said: Alas! wretched that I am; what is to me befallen, God have mercy on my daughter that thus taketh away my treasure and quencheth the light of mine eyes, I would have given thee to the spouse of heaven, and weened to have saved thee, and thou art demeasured in worldly love and fleshly. Abide daughter and tarry that I may marry thee to him that I had purposed, and bring not me my last days in sorrow. And she cried and said: Father, do as I have said, or anon thou shalt see me dead. And so as she wept bitterly as out of her wit, the father in great desolation of heart moved by the counsel of his friends, and deceived, did her pleasure and married her to the young man and gave to her all his substance, saying: Go forth my daughter, very caitiff that thou art, and forth she went and took him to her husband and they dwelled together. The husband went not to church, ne he blessed him not, ne recommended him not to God, whereof many of the neighbours noted it, and said to the wife: This young man that thou hast taken is not christened, ne he goeth not to the church. And when she heard that she was much abashed, and for sorrow fell down to the ground, and with her nails began to scratch her face, and beat her breast and said: Alas! most miserable wretch that I am, whereto was I born? I would I had perished in my birth. And then she told her husband what she had heard of him, and he answered that it was nothing so;

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then said she: If thou wilt that I believe thee, thou and I shall to-morn go to church, and then shall I know if it be true that thou sayest. Then he yielded him, confused, and saw well that he might not deny but it was so, and told to her all that he had done. And when she had heard all the case how he had done, she began to wail and to weep strongly, and forthwith went to S. Basil and rehearsed to him all that she had heard of her husband. And S. Basil sent for the husband and said to him: My son, wilt thou return again to God? Sire, said he, yea, but I may not, for I have bound myself to the devil, and renied Jesu Christ, and thereof I have made a writing of my hand and delivered it to him. And S. Basil said to him: Thereof no force; our Lord is debonair and merciful, and shall receive thee if thou repentest thee. And anon took the young man and made the sign of the cross on his forehead, and shut him in a chamber three days. After, he went to see him, and demanded saying: My son, how is it with thee? And he answered: Sire, I am in great pain, and in great anguish, in such ways that I may not bear the clamours, the terrors, and the lapidiments that the fiends do to me, for they hold in their hands my writing in accusing me, and saying I came to them and not they to me. Then said Basil: My son, be not afeard, but put firmly thy belief in Jesu Christ. And S. Basil gave to him a little meat for to comfort him and marked him with the sign of the cross, and closed him again, and he went and prayed for him. After certain days passed, he went and visited him again, and asked how it was with him, and he answered much better than tofore. I hear their clamours and their menaces, but I see them not. S. Basil

gave him meat and closed the door and blessed him, and went and prayed God for him, and forty days after he returned and said to him: My son, how is it with thee? He answered: Holy father, it is well with me this day for I have seen thee fight for me, and overcome the devil. Then he took him out, and called all the clergy, the religiouses, and the people, and warned them that they should pray all for him, and led the young man by the hand to the church. And anon the devil with a great multitude of fiends, without seeing of any man, took the young man and pained them to take him out of the hand of S. Basil. And the young man began to cry; Holy saint of God, help me. And the fiends enforced them so greatly that they made S. Basil to move in holding the young man. S. Basil said: Thou cursed and cruel fiend, sufficeth not to thee enough thy perdition proper, but thou must tempt the creatures of my God for to have them lost? The devil then said, hearing many, O Basil, thou grievest and annoyest me much. Then all the people cried, Kyrie eleison, and S. Basil said to the devil: Our Lord God blame and reprove thee, cursed fiend. And the devil said to him, Basil, thou grievest and annoyest me much; I went not to him, but he came to me, he hath renied his God and hath confessed me to be his lord, lo! here in my hand the writing that he gave to me. And S. Basil said to him: We shall not cease to pray for him unto the time that thou shalt deliver his writing. And thus as S. Basil prayed holding the hand of the young man, the schedule which he had made was brought in the air in the sight of all, and was laid in the hand of S. Basil, the which received it and said to the child:

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Brother, knowest thou these letters? And he answered him: I know them well, for they were written with my hand. Then S. Basil brake them, and led the child to the church, and so ordained and disposed him, that he was worthy to receive the holy sacrament and after, he being enseigned and taught, delivered to him a rule how he should keep him, and delivered him to his wife.

Also there was a woman that had committed many sins, the which she all wrote, and at the end there was one more grievous than the other, which in the writing she delivered to S. Basil, praying him to pray for her, and that by his prayers her sins might be forgiven. And then he prayed for her, and the woman opened the bill, wherein she found all the sins defaced and put out except the grievous sin. And she came to S. Basil and said: Thou holy saint of God, have mercy on me, and get me forgiveness for this, like as thou hast done for the other, and S. Basil said to the woman: Leave and go from me, woman, for I am a man, sinful as thou art, which have need of pardon as much as thou. And as that she was busy and grievous to him, he said to her: Go unto the holy man that is named Effrem, and demand of him that he may get pardon for thee. And when she came to the holy man Effrem, and had told to him wherefore she was sent to him from S. Basil, he said to her: Go from me, for I am a sinful man, but go again to S. Basil, and it is he that may get thee forgiveness for this sin like as he did for the other; and haste thee to the end that thou mayst find him alive. And when she came into the city, S. Basil was borne to the church for to be buried, and she began to cry, saying: God be

judge between me and thee, for thou mayst well appease God for me, and thou hast sent me to another, and anon she threw the bill upon the covering of the bier. And anon after she took it again, and opened it, and found it all plain, and out clean of the bill, and then with others she gave thankings to God. Tofore or S. Basil died, he being in the malady that he died, he did do come a Jew to him which was much expert in physic, and he loved him because he saw that he should be converted to the faith. And when he was come, he felt his pulse, and saw that he was nigh his end, and said to his meiny: Make ye ready such thing as behoveth for his sepulture, for he shall die anon. Which word S. Basil heard and said to him: Thou wottest not what thou sayest; and the Jew, named Joseph, said to him: This day shalt thou die when the sun shall go down in the west. To whom S. Basil said: What shalt thou say if I die not this day? To whom Joseph said: Sire, it is not otherwise possible. Then said S. Basil: if I live unto the morrow noon what shalt thou do? And Joseph said: If thou live until the morrow that hour I shall die; and S. Basil said: thou sayst truth, thou shalt die, that is, sin shall die in thee to the end that thou shalt live in Jesu Christ. And Joseph said: I wot well what thou sayest, and if thou live unto that time I shall do that thou sayest. Then S. Basil said, how well that by nature he should have died anon forthwith, yet he gat and impetred of God space that he should not then die, and lived unto the morn at noon, which thing seeing, Joseph marvelled much and believed in Jesu Christ.

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S. Basil then took heart, and overcame the

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feebleness of the body, and arose out of his bed and went to the church, and with his proper hands baptized the Jew, and after returned to his bed, and anon gave up his spirit, and rendered his soul unto God about the year of our Lord three hundred and seventy. Then let us pray to him that he get us grace of our Lord Jesu Christ that he will forgive us all our sins.

Here followeth the Life of S. John the Almoner.

S. John the Almoner was patriarch of Jerusalem. He saw on a time, in a vision, a much fair maid which had on her head a crown of olive, and when he saw her he was greatly abashed and demanded her what she was? This maid answered to him: I am Mercy which brought from heaven the son of God, if thou wilt wed me, thou shalt fare the better. Then he, understanding that the olive betokeneth mercy, began that same day to be merciful in such wise that he was called Almoner or amener, and he called alway the poor people his lords. Then he called his servants and said to them: Go through the city and write ye all the names of my lords, and when he saw that they understood not his words, he said to them: They be they that ye call poor and mendicants, I call them my lords, and I say they be my helpers, and trust it well that they move help and get me the kingdom of heaven. And because he would stir the people to do alms, he said that when the poor men were once together warming them against the sun, they began to tell who were good almsmen, and them would the

praise, and blame them that were evil. Among all other he told this narration.

The Life of S. John the Almoner

There was sometime a toller named Peter in a city, and was a much rich man, but he was not piteous, but cruel to poor people, for he would hunt and chase away poor people and beggars from his house with indignation and anger. Thus would no poor man come to him for alms. Then was there one poor man said to his fellows: What will ye give me if I get of him an alms this day? And they made a wager with him that he should not, which done, he went to this toller's house and stood at the gate, and demanded alms. And when this rich man came and saw this poor man at his gate he was much angry and would have cast somewhat at his head, but he could find nothing, till at last came one of his servants bearing a basket full of bread of rye, and in a great anger, he took a rye loaf, and threw it at his head, as he that might not hear the cry of the poor man. And he took up the loaf and ran to his fellows and said truly that he had received that loaf of Peter's own hand. And then within two days after, this rich man was sick, and like for to die, and as he lay he was ravished in spirit, in which he saw that he was set in judgment, and black men bringing forth his wicked deeds, and laid them in a balance on that one side, and on that other side he saw some clothed in white, mourning and sorrowful, but they had nothing to leave against them in that other balance, and one of them said: Truly we have nothing but a rye loaf which he gave to God against his will but two days gone. And then they put that loaf into that balance, and him seemed the balances were like even. Then they said to him: Increase and

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multiply this rye loaf, or else thou must be delivered to these black moors or fiends. And when he awoke he said: Alas! if a rye loaf have so much availed me which I gave in despite, how much should it have availed me if I had given all my goods to poor men with a good will. As this rich man went on a day clothed with his best clothes, a poor shipman came to him all naked and demanded of him some clothing, for the love of God, to cover him withal, and he anon despoiled himself, and gave to him his rich clothing, that he ware, and anon the poor man sold it; and when he knew that the poor man had sold it, he was so sorry that he would eat no meat, but he said: Alas! I am not worthy that the poor man think upon me. And the night following when he slept, he saw one brighter than the sun, having a cross on his head wearing the same cloth that he had given to the poor man, and he said to him: Why weepest thou Tollener? And when he had told him the cause of his sorrow, he said to him: Knowest thou this cloth? And he said: Yea, Sire; and then our Lord said: I have been clothed therewith sith thou gavest it to me, and I thank thee of thy good will that thou hadst pity of my nakedness, for when I was a cold thou coveredst me. And when he awoke he blessed the poor people, and said: By the living God! if I live I will be one of his poor men. And when he had given all his good to poor men, he called one of his secret men whom he trusted well and said to him: I have a secret counsel to tell thee, and if thou keep it not secret and do as I bid thee, I shall sell thee to the heathen men. And he took him ten pound in gold and had him go into the holy city, and buy

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some necessary ware, and when thou hast so done, take me and sell me to some christian man, and take that money that thou shalt receive for me, and give it to poor people. And the servant refused it, and he said: Truly if thou sell me not, I shall sell thee to the barbaries. And then he took this Peter the tollener as he had commanded him, which was his master, clad in vile clothing, and led him to the market and sold him to an argenter for thirty besants, which he took and dealt it among poor men. This Peter then thus sold was bound and put into a kitchen for to do all foul works, in such wise that he was despised of every man of the servants. And some oft smote him and knocked him about the head, and called him fool. Christ appeared oft to him and showed him his clothing and the besants and comforted him. And the Emperor and other people were sorry for Peter the tollener. And it happed that noble men of Constantinople came unto the place whereas Peter was for to visit holy places, whom the master of Peter bade to dinner, and as they sat and ate at their dinner, Peter served and passed by them, and they, beholding him, said to each other in their ears, how like is this young man to Peter the tollener, and as they well saw and advised him they said: Verily it is my lord Peter; I shall arise and hold him, and when Peter understood that he fled away privily.

There was a porter which was both deaf and dumb, and by signs he opened the gates, and Peter bade him by words to open the gates; and he anon heard him and receiving speech answered him, and Peter went his way. And the porter returned into the house speaking and hearing, whereof all they marvelled, to whom he said:

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He that was in the kitchen is gone out and fleeth away, but know ye for certain that he is the servant of God, for as he spake and bade me open the gate, there issued out of his mouth a flame of fire, which touched my tongue and mine ears, and anon I received hearing and speaking. And anon they all went out and ran after him, but they might not find him. Then all they of the house repented them, and did penance, because they had so foul entreated him.

There was a monk named Vital which would assay if he might raise any slander against S. John. And S. John came in to a city and went unto all the bordels of common women and said to each of them by order: Give me this night and do no fornication. Then he entered into the house of one and was in a corner all the night on his knees in prayer and prayed for her. And on the morn he went and commanded to each of them that they should tell it to no man, yet one of them manifested his life. And anon as S. John had prayed she began to be tormented with a devil, and anon the other women said to her: God hath given to thee that that thou hast deserved, because she entered for to do fornication and not for none other cause. And when it was even, the foresaid monk Vital said tofore them all: I will go thither, for that woman abideth me, then many blamed him, and he answered and said: Am I not a man as another is? I have a body as other men have, is God only wrath with monks? they be men as other be. Then some of them said to him: Take to thee a wife, and change thine habit so that thou scandal not others. He feigning himself wroth said: Verily I shall not hear you, who that will be slandered let him be slandered, and let him smite

his forehead against the wall, be ye ordained to be my judges of God? Go ye and take heed of yourselves, for ye shall give none accounts for me; and this he said with a loud voice. And then they complained to S. John of his governance, but our Lord harded so his heart that he gave no credence to their words, but he prayed God that he would show his works to some creature after his death, and that it should not turn to his blame that defamed him. By this means he brought many for to be converted, and set of them many for to be closed in religion. In a morning, as he went from them one of these common women met with a man that entered in for to do fornication, who gave to him a buffet and said: Thou wicked man, why amendest thou not thy wicked living? And he said to him: Believe me right well that thou shalt have such a buffet that all Alexandria shall assemble to wonder on thee. And after that the fiend came in likeness of a man, and gave him a buffet, and said to him: This is the buffet that the abbot Vital promised thee, and anon he was ravished with the fiend, and tormented so that all the people drew to him and wondered on him; but at the last he was repentant and was healed by the prayers of S. Vital. And when the servant of God was nigh his end he left in writing to his disciples: Judge ye never before the time; and when he was dead the women confessed what he had done, and all they glorified God, and namely S. John, saying: Would God that ilke buffet that he took I had taken.

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There was a poor man in the habit of a pilgrim came to S. John and demanded alms, and he called his dispenser and bade him to give to him sixpence, which he received, and went his way, and changed

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his clothing, and came to the patriarch and asked alms, and he called his dispenser and bade him to give him sixpence of gold, and when he had given to him and was departed, the dispenser said to his lord: Father, at your request this man hath received twice alms this day, and hath changed his habit twice; S. John feigned as he had not heard it. And the poor man changed his clothing the third time, and came again to S. John, and asked yet the third time alms, and then the dispenser told his lord privily that he was the same beggar, to whom S. John said: Give to him twelve besants, lest it be my Lord Jesu Christ that will prove me whether he might more take or I give.

On a time it happed that one Patricius had certain money of the church which he would put in merchandise, but the patriarch would in no wise consent thereto, but would it should be given to poor people, and they could not accord but departed all wroth. And after evensong time the patriarch sent to the archpriest Patricius, saying: Sir, the sun is nigh gone down, and he hearing that anon he wept, and came to him and asked for forgiveness. On a time the nephew of the patriarch suffered wrong of a taverner, and complained lamentably to the patriarch and could not be comforted, and the patriarch said to him: Who is so hardy that dare say against thee or open his mouth against thee? Believe me, son, that I shall this day do for thee such a thing that all Alexandria shall wonder on it. And when he heard that he was well comforted, weening that the taverner should have been sore beaten. And S. John seeing that he was comforted kissed his breast and said: Son, if thou be verily the nephew

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of mine humility, make thee ready to be scourged and to suffer of every man beatings, chidings and wrongs, for very affinity is not only of flesh and blood, but it is known by the strength of virtue: and anon he sent for that man and made him free of all pension and tribute. And all they that heard this wondered greatly, and then understood they that he had said before, that he would so do that all Alexandria should wonder thereof.

The patriarch hearing of the custom that is when the emperor is crowned, there shall come to him the makers of sepultures and bring stones of marble of divers colours, and demand the emperor of what stones he will have his grave made, or of what metal. S. John remembering this, commanded to make his sepulture, but yet he did not do make it all but left it imperfect unto his end. And he ordained that at every feast, when he was with the clergy, some should come to him and say: Sire, thy monument or sepulture is not all made, but imperfect, command that it may be made, for thou wotest not what hour thou shalt die, ne when the thief cometh.

There was a rich man which saw S. John, having in his bed but vile clothes and not rich, for he had given all his goods to poor men. He bought for him a much rich coverture for his bed and gave it to S. John. And in a night, as it lay upon him, he could not sleep, for he thought three hundred of his lords might well have been covered withal, and made all that night lamentation, saying: Ah Lord, how many be there of my lords now in the mire, how many in the rain, how many so cold that their teeth beat together, and how many that sleep in the market place; and said to himself: And thou wretch devourest the great fishes,

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and restest in thy chamber with thy wickedness under a coverture of twenty-six pounds to warm thy carrion. And after he would never be covered therewith, but on the morn he did do sell it and gave the money thereof to poor people. And when the rich man saw it he bought it again and took it to the blessed S. John and desired him no more to sell it, but keep it for himself. And anon after S. John sold it again and gave the money of it to poor people. And when the rich man wist it, yet he bought it again and brought it to S. John full goodly, and said to him: We shall see who shall fail of us, or thou in the selling or I in the buying; and thus it was oft bought and sold, the rich man seeing well that he might well minish his riches in this manner without sin, to the intent to give it to poor people. And they both should win in this manner, that one in saving of their souls, and that other in getting reward. And S. John would draw men to do alms in this manner; he was accustomed to tell of S. Serapion, when he had given his mantle to a poor man and after met with another that had cold, he gave him his coat, and himself sat all naked. And one demanded of him: Father, who hath despoiled thee? And he had in his hand the book of the evangelists and said: This hath despoiled me. And anon he saw another poor man, and then he sold the book of gospels and gave the price thereof to poor men, and when he was demanded where his book of the gospels was, he answered and said: That the gospel commandeth and saith: Go and sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor, I had this gospel and I have sold it like as he commanded.

On a time he gave to a poor man five besants,

and the poor man had disdain thereof and began to chide and despise him in his visage because he had no more alms, and when his servants saw that, they would have beaten him, and then the blessed John defended them saying: Suffer ye him brethren and let him curse me, lo! I have these thirty years blasphemed by my works Christ, and may not I bear one blame or vice of this man? And he commanded that a sack of money full should be brought tofore this poor man, that he should take as much as he would. **The Life of S. John the Almoner**

On a time, after that the gospel was read in the church, the people went out and talked idle tales, and this holy patriarch apperceived them and followed after and sat down among them, and said to them: Sons, there as the sheep be, there must be the shepherd also, and therefore, either ye must enter with me into the church or else I must abide with you here, and thus he did twice and thereby he taught the people to abide and stand in the church.

Another time there was a young man had ravished a nun, and the clerks reproved the young man thereof tofore S. John, and said he ought to be cursed therefor, because he had lost two souls, his own and the nun's. Then S. John withstood their sentence saying: Not so my sons, not so, I shall show that ye commit two sins: first, ye do against the commandment of God which saith: Judge ye not, and ye shall not be judged. Secondly, ye wit not for certain whether they have sinned into this day, and have not been penitent and have repented them. It fell many times that S. John was ravished in his prayers, and was in a trance, and he was heard dispute with our Lord in these

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words: So, good Lord Jesu Christ, so; I in parting and thou in ministering, let us see who shall overcome.

On a time when he was sick and vexed with the fevers, and saw that he approached his end, he said: I yield to thee thankings for thou hast heard my wretchedness praying thy goodness that at my death should be found with me but one besant or one piece of money, and that yet I command to be given to the poor. And then he yielded his soul unto Almighty God. And his venerable body was put in a sepulchre where the bodies of two bishops were buried, and the two bodies by miracle gave room and place to the body of S. John, for they removed each from other and left the middle void for his body.

A little time tofore his death there was a woman had committed a great and horrible sin, and durst not be shriven thereof ne show it to no man. S. John bade her write it and seal it, and bring it to him, and he would pray for her. She assented thereto; she wrote her sin, and diligently closed and sealed it and delivered it to S. John. And anon after S. John waxed sick and died, and when she heard that he was dead she supposed herself confused and shamed, for she weened that he had delivered it to some other man, and she came to his tomb, and there wept and cried much lamentably, saying: Alas! alas! I supposed to have eschewed my confusion and now I am made confusion unto all others, and wept bitterly praying S. John that he would show to her where he had left her writing. And suddenly S. John came and appeared to her in the habit of a bishop, on either side of him a bishop, and said to the woman: Why troublest thou me so much, and these saints with

me, and sufferest not us to have rest? Lo, here our clothes be all wet of thy tears, and then delivered to her her scroll again, sealed as it was tofore, saying to her: See here thy seal, open thy writing and read it; which anon she opened and all her sin was defaced and clean out, and she found therein written: All thy sin is forgiven and put away by the prayer of John, my servant. And then she rendered thankings to our Lord God and to S. John, and then S. John with the two bishops returned into their sepulture. This holy man S. John flourished in the year of our Lord six hundred and five, in the time of Phocas the emperor. The Conversion of S. Paul

Of the Conversion of S. Paul and of the name of conversion

Conversion is said of convertor, I am turned, or is as much as together turned from sins and evils. He is not converted that shriveth him to the priest of one sin and hideth another. It is said conversion, for S. Paul this day was converted to the faith leaving his vices. Why he is said Paul, it shall be said afterward.

Of the Conversion of S. Paul.

The conversion of S. Paul was made the same year that Christ suffered his passion, and S. Stephen was stoned also, not in the year natural, but appearing. For our Lord suffered death the eighth calends of April, and S. Stephen suffered death the same year, the third day of August, and was stoned. And S. Paul was converted the eighth

The Conversion of S. Paul

calends of february. And three reasons been assigned wherefore the conversion of S. Paul is hallowed more than of other saints.

First for the ensample, because that no sinner, whatsomever he be, should despair of pardon when he seeth him that was in so great sin to be in so great joy. Secondly for the joy, for like as the church had great sorrow in this persecution, so had she great joy in his conversion. Thirdly, for the miracle that our Lord showed when of one so cruel a persecutor was made so true a preacher. The conversion of him was marvellous by reason of him that made him, and of him that ordained him, and of the patient that suffered it. By reason of him that made him to be converted, that was Jesu Christ, which showed there his marvellous puissance in that he said: It is hard for thee to strive against the alle or pricks; and in that he changed him so suddenly, for anon as he was changed he said: Lord what wilt thou that I do? Upon this word saith S. Austin: The lambs slain of the wolves have made of a wolf a lamb, for he was ready for to obey, that tofore was wood for to persecute. Secondly, he showed his marvellous wisdom. His marvellous wisdom was in that he took from him the swelling of pride in offering to him the inward things of humility and not the height of majesty. For he said I am Jesus of Nazareth, and he called not himself God ne the son of God, but he said to him, take thine infirmities of humanity and cast away the squames of pride. Thirdly, he showed his pitiful debonairty and mercy, which is signified in that that he that was in deed and in will to persecute, he converted, how be it he had evil will, as he that desired all the menaces and

threatenings, and had evil purpose; as he that went to the prince of priests; as he that had a joy in his evil works that he led the christian men bound to Jerusalem. And therefore his journey and voyage was right evil, and yet nevertheless by the mercy of God was he converted. Secondly the conversion was marvellous of him that ordained it, that is of the light that he ordained in his conversion. And it is said that this light was dispositive, sudden, and celestial, and this light of heaven advironed him suddenly. Paul had in him these vices. The first was hardiness, which is noted when it is said that he went to the prince of the priests, and as the gloss saith, not called, but by his own will and envy that enticed him. The second was pride, and that is signified by that he desired and sighed the menaces and threatenings. The third was the intent carnal, and the understanding that he had in the law, whereof the gloss saith upon that word: I am Jesus, etc. I God of heaven speak, the which thou supposest to be dead by the consent of the Jews. And this light divine was sudden, it was great, and out of measure, for to throw down him that was high and proud, into the ditch or pit of humanity; it was celestial, because it turned and changed his fleshly understanding into celestial, or it may be said that this ordinance or disposition was in three things; that is to wit in the voice crying, in the light shining, and in the virtue of puissance. Thirdly, it was marvellous by the virtue of the suffering of the patient, that is of Paul in whom the conversion was made. For these three things were made in him withoutforth marvellously, that it is to wit, that he was beaten to the earth, he was blind and fasted three days, and was smitten down to the

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ground for to be raised. And S. Austin saith that he was smitten down for to be blind, for to be changed, and for to be sent; he was sent to suffer death for truth. And yet saith S. Austin, he that was out of the faith was hurt for to be made believe, the persecutor was hurt for to be made a preacher, the son of perdition was hurt for to be made the vessel of election, and was made blind for to be illumined, and this was as touching his dark understanding.

Then in the three days that he abode thus blind, he was learned and informed in the gospel, for he learned it never of man ne by man, as he himself witnesseth, but by the revelation of Jesu Christ. And S. Austin saith thus: I say that S. Paul was the very champion of Jesu Christ, taught of him, redressed of him, crucified with him, and glorious in him. He was made lean in his flesh that his flesh should be disposed to the effect of good operation, and from forthon his body was established and disposed to all good. He could well suffer hunger and abundance, and was informed and instructed in all things, and all adversities he gladly suffered. Chrysostom saith: He overcame tormentors, tyrants, and people full of woodness, like as flies; and the death, the torments and all the pains that might be done to him, he counted them but as the play of children. All them he embraced with a good will, and he was ennobled in himself to be bound in a strong chain more than to be crowned with a crown, and received more gladly strokes and wounds than other gifts. And it is read that in him were three things against the three that were in our foremost father Adam, for Adam erected and addressed him against God our Lord, and in

S. Paul was contrary for he was thrown down to the earth. In Adam was the opening of his eyes, and Paul was on the contrary made blind, and Adam ate of the fruit defended, and S. Paul contrary was abstinent of convenable meat. **The Conversion of S. Paul**

GLOSSARY

achate, *n.*, purchase.
adjousted, *pp.*, Fr. *ajouter*, added.
argenter, *n.*, a money changer.
aspre, *adj.*, Fr. *âpre*, cruel.
awaits, *n.*, snares.

bained, *pp.*, Fr. *baigner*, bathed.
belues, *n.*, whales, or sea monsters.
blessure, *n.* (Fr.), a wound.
blyven, *pp. of* '*beleave*,' remained.
broches, *n.*, pointed rods.
bubals, *n.*, wild oxen.
bynomen, *pp. of* '*benim*,' to take away.

caricares, *n.*, figs.
cautelously, *adv.*, craftily.
chevisshed, *v.*, achieved his purpose.
chore (*for* '*cor*'), *n.*, a Hebrew measure of about eight bushels.
coarted, *pp.*, constrained or coerced.
coles, *n.*, cabbages.
colestaff, *n.*, a pole for carrying a burden between two persons.
conveying, *pr. p.*, guidance.

deduit, *n.* (Fr.), pleasure, comfort.
demene, *v.*, exhibit.
did do make=caused to be made.
dilection, *n.*, love.
dime, *n.*, a tithe.
direption, *n.*, pillage.
disperpled, *pp.*, scattered.

empesh, *v.*, Fr. *empêcher*, to hinder.

fardel, *n.*, a burden.

habergeon, *n.*, coat of scale armour.
hallows, *n.*, saints or chosen people.
havoir, *n.*, worldly goods.
houseled, *v.*, administered the eucharist.

impetre, *v.*, beseech.

japes, *n.*, jests or scoffs.

kele, *v.*, cool.

maleurte, *n.*, misery.
mechant, *adj.* (Fr.), wicked.
meiny, *n.*, company or retinue.
muyes, *n.*, Fr. *muids*, measures of about five quarters.

octroy, *v.* (Fr.), to bestow.
ongles, *n.* (Fr.), claws.
ouches, *n.*, jewels.

phitoness, *n.*, witch.
piscine, *n.*, a pool.
pois, *n.*, weight.
prestly, *adv.*, quickly.
prise, *n.*, capture.

quarfox, *n.*, four meeting ways.

releved, *v.*, Fr. *relever*, to raise up.
righter, *n.*, executioner.
routed, *v.*, snored.

sacre, *v.*, Fr. *sacrer*, to consecrate.
siffled, *v.*, Fr. *siffler*, whistled.
sikerness, *n.*, surety.
smaragdos, *n.*, emeralds.
spere, *v.*, inquire or search.
spincops, *n.*, spiders.
squames, *n.*, scales.
stagne, *n.*, Fr. *étang*, lake.
sweven, *n.*, a dream.

toller, *tollener*, *n.*, tax-farmer.

unguentaries, *n.*, makers of perfumes.
unnethe, *adv.*, scarcely.
urchin, *n.*, a hedgehog.

wood, *woodness*, *n.*, mad, madness.

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